THE SOUTHERN SIERRAS OF CALIFORNIA

by

CHARLES FRANCIS SAUNDERS

O.P. 3/27/42

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THE SOUTHERN SIERRAS OF CALIFORNIA

ON THE MALIBU, SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS

THE SOUTHERN SIERRAS OF CALIFORNIA

BY

CHARLES FRANCIS SAUNDERS

Author of "Under the Sky in California," "With the Flowers and Trees in California," "Finding the Worth While in California," etc., and Co-Author with J. Smeaton Chase of "The California Padres and Their Missions"

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR

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TO
M. B. C.

Your book, to bring you, cherished friend,
Tidings of the trail's far end;
News of the humor that distils
By living waters in the hills,
Where ouzels dip and lilies nod
And uplands glow with goldenrod,
Wild lilac blows and meadow rue
Hangs purple tassels touched with dew—
And always there is thought of you.

PREFACE

THOUGH the mountains of California have formed the subject of several notable books, these have dealt almost altogether with the mountains northward, particularly the Sierra Nevada. Yet Southern California has its sierras, too, the main ranges linked together into one, which lies like a colossal bent arm, three hundred miles in length, from Point Conception inland to the confines of the desert and so southward to the borders of Mexico. It is a region of intermittent forest and snug-fitting chaparral, breezy and sun-drenched, the sky-line averaging about six thousand feet above the sea, but here and there lifted up into higher peaks, of which the loftiest is somewhat over eleven thousand feet. Not only is this a region of great natural beauty, but it possesses, what most of our Western mountains are rather scant of, a good deal of human interest, both historic and contemporary. Across these southern sierras the Spaniard Anza led his band of colonists to the founding of the city of San Francisco; into their fastnesses the Little Brothers of Saint Francis would go in quest of souls in peril; traders and trappers, gold-seekers and land-hungry immigrants, bandits and horse-rustlers found the southern passes in pre-railway days ever open gateways to the Land of Promise. To-day the region is a mecca for hundreds of thousands of recreationists

who go thronging to it summer and winter, for a change from money-grubbing and the routine of home, and who receive from it that sure comfort which the name given to the chain by the old Spaniards — the Mother Mountains — may be taken to promise.

Something of this kindly, human quality, rather than scientific facts about rocks and glacial evidences, for instance, it is the modest purpose of the following discursive pages to convey; and in offering them to the reader, the author desires to acknowledge with gratitude the many courtesies that he has experienced as an unknown inquirer at the hands of the various officials of the United States Forest Service, and in particular from Mr. Thomas W. Sloan, Chief of the Pasadena office. He also wishes to record his thanks to the publishers of *Travel* for permission to use in the section "In the San Bernardinos" portions of an article contributed by him to that magazine.

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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THE SOUTHERN SIERRAS OF CALIFORNIA

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AFOOT IN THE SIERRA MADRE

What is your right, ye rugged peaks, to the tender
Queenly promise and pride of the Mother name?

HENRY VAN DYKE, *To the Sierra Madre*

"No, I don't like either the word 'hike' or the thing itself. I have a better word. It is 'saunter.'"

JOHN MUIR, *in an interview*

THE SOUTHERN SIERRAS OF CALIFORNIA

I

HOW TO KNOW A SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA RIVER AND WHAT THE SIERRA MADRE IS

EVERY week-end and holiday throughout the dry season — and in winter too, when the weather is fine — the electric cars out of Los Angeles bear cheerful parties of young and old in tramping gear and with knapsack and blanket-roll, bound for pleasure to the cañons of the Sierra Madre, that noble range of multitudinous peaks and ridges fifteen miles away which forms the northern wall of the San Gabriel Valley.

It is characteristic of Southern California mountain chains that, viewed from without, as from the window of a railway car or from an automobile on some orange-bordered boulevard of the valley country, they seem austere, barren, and uninviting. Clad in dull green coats of short, shaggy chaparral, which is threadbare in spots and quite worn through where naked rocks and bare earth stare gauntly out, these mountains of the south strike one at first as half-starved poor relations set down at the foot of that regal sierran board at whose head the snow-crowned Shasta presides. Innumerable stark gulches and cañons furrow the treeless outer slopes from

crest to foot; and here and there from one of these, cleft deeper than its neighbors, issues a gravelly, boulder-strewn wash of the sort that Spanish-Californians called an "arroyo." Your Spanish dictionary translates the word as a small river; but why, you wonder, should sand and rubble be called a river? You had thought a river implies water. So it does; and in the rainy season — at least hard upon storms — these arroyos flow wet enough. But what if a river sinks through its bottom and, leaving this bottom on top, pursues its travels modestly under cover? Is it then any less a river? Old California thought not, and Gringo California thinks not.

So it follows that those Southern California streams that the traveler by atlas naturally enough assumes to be imposing waterways — dignified upon the map with broad channels in black ink, fed copiously by affluents equally inky, and maintaining stately names, as Santa Ana, San Gabriel, Santa Clara del Sur — prove on inspection to be, during eight or nine months of the year, little more than floods of sand littered with cobbles, where lizards bask and snap up flies and top-knotted quail toe about dry-shod. Nevertheless, the stream is tranquilly moving along a few feet beneath, as Brother Coyote scooping a well in the sand with his paws showed many a thirsty pioneer, and as modern pumping plants more abundantly attest. One must take one's rivers as one finds them, and, in the picturesque language of the West, Southern California rivers "flow upside down."

Yet this tells but half the tale, for it is descriptive of only the river's course in the valley and lowland. To complete the story, you must follow up the arroyo mile after mile toward its sources in the living heart of the hills; and so, seeking to know the river, you come into the revelation of the mountains — an unsuspected world of noble trees and lily gardens, of fern-draped cliffs and trouty pools and musical cascades.

Granite-bastioned and buttressed, the Sierra Madre is a colossal natural barrier that shuts off the desert and its withering influences from the fertile coastal plain of which Los Angeles is the metropolis. It stretches, sixty miles in length and twenty in breadth as the crow flies, from the Soledad Pass, which separates it from the mountains of Ventura on the west, to the Cajon Pass, which divides it from the San Bernardino Range on the east. Roughly speaking, the crest of the Sierra Madre is a mile high; but one peak — San Antonio, the "Old Baldy" of familiar speech — rises to something over ten thousand feet, and clustered near it are half a dozen others of eight thousand to nine thousand feet. From that down to four thousand feet are at least a score of peaks, easy to climb, affording superb views and supporting open, sunny forests of live-oak, several sorts of pine, incense-cedar and big-cone spruce, where deer, gray squirrels, and quail live in happy comradery, though not in perfect security for bobcats, foxes, and mountain lions, to say nothing of rattlesnakes, are by no means un-

known. From the red hand of man, however, there is protection; since a large part of the sierra has recently been created a State Game Refuge, where the killing of any animal is illegal, except predatory ones, and for these a permit must be obtained. Winter storms, which precipitate rain upon the foothills and valleys, frequently descend in snow upon the elevations above three thousand feet (or occasionally even lower), to melt quickly, however, upon the passing of the storm, except upon sunless, northward-facing slopes. The one notable exception is San Antonio, which ordinarily retains a crown of snow until June, a vision of loveliness made much of by valley folk looking up at it from amid their orange groves and roses. During about half the year no precipitation of either rain or snow is to be expected, barring an occasional thunder-shower.

Though at the very edge of one of the most highly cultivated and most populous sections of California, the Sierra Madre is still a very wild land. Only trails traverse its interior, and there is but a handful of permanent inhabitants — here and there a boarding-camp for the accommodation of anglers and summer outers, and an occasional settler whose modest agricultural rights have survived the Government's taking over of the region as the western division of the Angeles National Forest Reserve. A taste of it may be had by tourists who climb Mount Lowe by the electric railway which clings to the sierra's southern face above Pasadena; a more satisfying view of the tumbled mass of mountains is had from the neighboring Mount Wilson, where the

Carnegie Solar Observatory is perched, which may be reached by a zigzagging automobile road, also from Pasadena; but still better is the outlook from San Gabriel Peak, an eminence about a mile inland from Mount Lowe. The ascent of San Gabriel is fairly easy if you can find the one dim trail, rather rough in places, on the north slope. From the summit, which is 6152 feet above the sea, the heart of the sierra lies disclosed like a relief map to the confines of the desert. Then there is the stage from the valley town of Azusa which will transport you, when the river is low, twenty miles or so up the bottom of the fine cañon of the San Gabriel River and deposit you among the fishing-camps of the West and East Forks; or you may motor a less distance winter or summer, up the San Antonio Cañon from the orange groves of Ontario to the foot of "Old Baldy" himself; or from the village of Sunland on the borders of the San Fernando Valley you may jolt in your car a dozen miles up the bottom of the Big Tujunga Cañon to Hoyt's old ranch.

Yet, after all, none of these sops to the easy-going touches more than the fringes of the Promised Land. Really to enter in and enjoy its milk and honey, there is nothing for it but to walk or ride horseback. Progressive citizens who belong to Boards of Trade and Improvement Associations, clamor yearly for automobile highways to penetrate the Sierra Madre's silent places and put Switzerland out of business; but to minds not obsessed by a passion for noise and rapid transit, the very fact of this being an easily accessible

region, where the immemorial joys of the footpath are conserved, is a major reason for keeping it so. They tell a story in the mountains of this "mossback" point of view. A good many years ago some restless spirits started a subscription paper for the repairing of the old miners' road in the San Gabriel Cañon, which through a generation of neglect had become all but impassable. The petition was handed one day to Judge Clark for his signature. He was a breezy old gentleman who enjoyed an annual fishing vacation in the cañon, and he liked it quiet. His answer to the request was an unconscious parallel to the famous "millions for defense" speech of our school histories.

"Not a copper, gentlemen," he snorted, "not a copper; but I'll subscribe whatever may be needed for dynamite to blow to the Old Harry as much of the road as still holds!"

Nevertheless, the Boards of Trade have won a preliminary skirmish or two, and certain projected highroads to cross the sierra and traverse its crest bid fair to become in the next decade an actuality. When they do, startled Echo will add to her repertoire the strident honk of the automobile horn where now she knows only yelp of coyote and bark of fox.

II

THE CAÑON OF THE ARROYO SECO

FOR ten years I had been looking from my back door at the long, dark line of the Sierra Madre, when one summer a dominating desire to learn something of what lay within led me a tramp of a hundred miles or so over some of its less frequented trails. I reckoned on lodging each night at some one of the boarding-camps, which are sufficiently near one another to make it possible for the stout of leg to explore the range pretty thoroughly with a minimum of provision on his person. I was glad of that. At fifty-eight one's physical handicaps are quite sufficient without the voluntary addition of a twenty-five-pound pack to one's back, or the continual holding of a burro to his business; for, useful as a donkey unquestionably can be, he is capable of becoming on occasion a very Pandora's box of stubborn sorrows. So with a few toilet necessities, a packet of tea, some raisins, a dozen hardtack, and a tin of chocolate packed in a small haversack slung over my shoulder, and twenty dollars in my pocket, I set out from Pasadena one dewy morning of mid-July, while the great valley still slumbered under a nightcap of fog.

My only companions on the early electric car that bore me to the town limits were a young workingman and his lass in outing garb. On alighting, they went east as I went west, and east being east and

west being west, we met no more. I struck soon into a rough road which followed the bed of the Arroyo Seco toward its springs in the midst of the high mountains. Shortly the open country was left behind, and I passed from sunshine into the shadows of a narrow gorge on whose bottom and far up the precipitous sides grew a luxuriant cover of trees, shrubs, and flowering herbs. The arroyo was here a limpid stream eight or ten feet wide, now wimpling over gravelly shallows, now pausing in still, contemplative pools beside gray, granite boulders, which strewed the channel. Big-girthed sycamores, most decorative of Western trees, cast a dappled shade along the lower reaches of the stream, but soon gave place to a scattering of live-oaks and stately colonnades of alder — this last not the lowly shrub that greets the spring with pretty, tasseled catkins beside Eastern brooks, but a lusty, smooth-barked tree, often fifty feet high or more, resembling a beech.

In this charming gorge was a veritable little sylvan city of cabins, tents, and even substantial bungalows strung along for three or four miles at liberal distances on both sides of the stream, and perched well up among the rocks and trees of the cañon's slopes — permanent camps of town-dwellers who maintain them for week-end and holiday retreats. The land on which they stand is in the National Forest and is leased from the Government at a small yearly rental subject to the oversight of the Forest Service. It is for the convenience of this community, and a public boarding-camp or two farther in, that

VACATIONISTS' CABINS IN A CAÑON NEAR PASADENA

the road exists. By it the camper drives in and out in his motor-car, if he has one, and here the grocer and the laundryman reach him in the wildwood as readily as in town. During the rainy season, high water makes access to these cañon dwellings more or less problematical; but from May until November the wood is merry with the chatter and songs of care-free vacationists, who toss their morning flapjacks over outdoor fireplaces, spread their tables beneath the trees, and sleep on cots under the stars or on porches screened from the flies. It is a sort of Arden life with Rosalinds and Orlandos in corduroy and khaki, and the melancholy Jaques quite left out.

At Oak Wylde, six miles within the cañon, the road narrowed to a trail. In the shadowy coves beside the stream tall leopard lilies bloomed and cardinal mimulus; damp cliffs were shingled with the buxom fronds of the California polypody, and climbing penstemon drooped graceful sprays of scarlet athwart the path. In sunny swales the vivid racemes of the red larkspur, a wild flower of regal quality, sparkled in the bright light like fire at the height of a man. Zigzagging up the precipitous side of a ridge, the trail brought me by and by to a view that proved the first of a sort that one finds to be characteristic of the southern side of this sierra. Far below foamed the waters of the upper arroyo, plunging in a series of small falls and cascades at the bottom of a deep, narrow gorge, to whose almost perpendicular walls clung a forest of live-oak, big-cone spruce, bay, alder, and mountain mahogany, and from that leafy depth rose the thin, reedy notes of wren-tits in happy

antiphony. On every side of my ridge rolled and tossed a sea of rounded, billowy summits and jagged crests clothed with an even, green mantle of flowery chaparral — manzanita, sumac, wild plum, dwarf oak, mountain lilac, and California holly. Here and there in the vast expanse of undulating chaparral a solitary big-cone spruce or a live-oak stood, a silent watcher, like a shepherd meditative in the midst of his flock. The only massed growth of timber visible was in the deeper cañon bottoms where there is perennial moisture. Southward the mountains sank gradually away to the great valley of San Gabriel, which that day was blurred beneath a gauzy veil of fog. Thence drew a cool, gentle breeze off the ocean twenty-five miles distant — a breeze that blows with clock-like regularity throughout the dry season and so tempers the ardor of the sun, which day after day out of the cloudless blue beats insistently down upon these heights, that the hottest trail is made bearable. For half an hour I lay in the shadow of a shrub, surrendering myself to the view and the breeze, in a blessed silence unbroken save by the bees among the pompons of the wild buckwheat bloom.

Down from this sunny height the trail dropped me into the shade of the arroyo's gorge again, and so led me to the gateway of a rustic bridge that spanned the stream to a rustic hotel. A sign at the gate pleasantly blended sentiment and practicality:

LEAVE YOUR CARES AND ANIMALS THIS SIDE THE STREAM

TENTS AND COTTAGES FOR HOUSEKEEPING

I crossed and encountered on the hotel porch a youngish-looking, spectacled man, with a bald head and an alert manner. He extended a hand and said briskly:

"Glad to see you, friend. Come in and register. Austin is mine. What's yours?"

This was Switzer's Camp, and lunch was just going on the table.

III

CAUGHT FAST ON STRAWBERRY

SWITZER'S is a type of the better sort of Southern California mountain resort. There is a substantial central building embracing office, dining-room, kitchen, and assembly hall — the last with a huge open fireplace, about which guests gather on cool evenings to chat, spin yarns, listen to music, and toast marshmallows and wieners. Under the trees near by are numerous tents and canvas-walled cottages, where people are lodged. Some of these are fitted up for housekeeping for such visitors as, from motives of economy or exclusiveness, prefer to maintain their private establishments. There is daily communication with the outer world by means of a pack-burro train connecting at Oak Wylde with a stage to Pasadena. The burro transportation is very much as it was in the 1880's when C. P. Switzer, a Los Angeles carpenter, who had regained his health in these mountains, put up some rough log cabins for the housing of hunters and others, and incidentally earned for himself the sobriquet of "Commodore" because of his skill in navigating his burro squadron through the devious waters of the Arroyo Seco!

As I came out from lunch, a mildly excited knot of guests had gathered on the porch, and were watching a string of the little animals neatly packed with grips, boxes, and the daily mail, daintily picking

their way across the stream and nosing the water ahead of them. Three hours from town is too near to be really freed from the civilized touch, and the make-up of the crowd showed it. There were placid ladies knitting; several girls chewing gum, their hands deep in the pockets of their sport trousers; a languid young man or two in tennis shoes; noisy, chubby children flushed from exercise in the swings; and an old gentleman asleep in his chair with a handkerchief over his face. A gramophone somewhere was beating out, "I Love You, California." As I was out for wilder game, I believed I would go on.

A bright-faced young fellow with a knapsack on his back stepped off the porch as I started, and I asked him the way to Colby's.

"That's my way as far as Long Cañon," he replied; "come along and I'll show you that far. I turn off there to visit some fellows who are fishing on the West Fork. You'll make Colby's by supper all right. You'll like Colby's. You're really in the mountains there, and can hear the bobcats calling, and last Christmas they trapped a mountain lion there eight feet long. Switzer's is all right, too; but it is too much in a bag for me. I like to see out. Lots of people like Switzer's, though, you bet; take it easy, read and sleep, climb something now and then, talk it over for a week, and maybe walk to Mount Lowe. High jinks Saturday nights and holidays. Sometimes a personally conducted camping trip with a cook and a packer and a chaperon across the range to Coldbrook. Mother thinks it fine, and

it does her good. Every one to their likes, says I; but the long, quiet hike for mine and a bit of fishing. I've got my canteen, a blanket in my knapsack, a can of salmon-egg bait, and I don't much care where I get off. If there's running water, I'm sure of a fish supper, and if it must be a dry camp, there's crackers and cheese and a cup of chocolate out of my old kit sack. I got a fire permit from the ranger at Switzer's; for you need fire at your feet when you sleep out up here. It's chilly nights, you bet you."

In about a mile we came to a parting of the trail, where a neatly cleared space, with a stone fireplace in the midst, betokened a Forest Service campground for the itinerant.

"There goes your trail," said my companion. "That's old Strawberry, that mountain straight ahead, and a bully climb if you have time. You'll know Colby's when you get there, because it is the only place there is. So-long and good luck."

The trail, twisting like a corkscrew, rose gradually and crossed a shoulder of Strawberry Peak, under which the Arroyo Seco heads. It is a rugged summit, rising to 6150 feet, and, being the highest within a considerable radius, is a challenge to lovers of a fine outlook. Moreover, it is the one peak in the whole sierra to scale which develops some spice of danger. A well-worn trail followed the crest of one of the several ridges that radiate from the peak, and brought me to the base of an apparently perpendicular cliff a couple of hundred feet high and forming the last stage to the summit. A close scanning of the cliff's broken face showed plainly that the only

way up was to scale it as best I could; so, holding on by fingers and toes, and carefully testing the stability of the jutting rocks, root-ends, and clinging bushes which served me as pegs to climb by, I got on pretty well until, stopping for breath at a convenient corner of the wall, I happened to look down. Directly under me was an abysmal cañon down whose breakneck side some stones, loosened by my foot, went hurtling with fainter and fainter sound. As I have no pride of mountain climbing, and my head swims at the thought of precipices, that glance set me to thinking, and the situation assumed this shape in my mind:

Here I am holding like a fly to a crumbling wall, chancing my life for the sake of a view which, I will wager, is no different from a dozen others to be had without risk from more accessible heights. Is the game worth the candle?

I decided not; and began a prompt descent. Arrived at the bottom and picking up my coat, I looked back at the cliff and had a revulsion of thought; for I could then see, what I had not realized before, that where I had lost heart was in fact something over halfway up and beyond that point the cliff gave inward and appeared easier of ascent. It was humiliating to find I had given away a success almost won. "Even if no one is looking," I thought, "a man owes something to his self-respect. I'll try again."

So I started up once more, clutching carefully at every projecting hold and keeping steadfastly an upward look, until finally, after fifteen minutes'

tedious creeping, I scrambled out on the top, and lo! the kingdoms of the earth. Twenty-five miles eastward, "Old Baldy," genial giant of the Sierra Madre, blocked the view; but over one shoulder San Gorgonio peeped, revealing an arc of his smooth back outlined with a fringe of snow. Still farther on, San Jacinto's summit, lifted above a sea of vapor, floated like an island of the air. To the north beyond the range, a yellow smudge marked the desert's whereabouts; and nearer, almost at my feet, the great gray basin of the Big Tujunga lay in clear-cut relief, with Mill Creek, Alder Creek, Wickiup, and Coldwater draining into it. Oceanward the sierra sank gradually till its feet were sunk in a thin white fog that hid the great plain of San Gabriel; and beyond that, in the light of the evening sun, the sea gleamed like a shining platter, bearing twin-peaked Santa Catalina in its golden midst.

A superb view, but into its enjoyment came now and again, like the intruding death's-head at the feast, the thought of that abominable cliff, which had to be descended. There was no escaping it, as on every side of the summit except that one the mountain fell away sharply in cañons that looked deeper than the seven hells of Islam. Only by the cliff of my ascent was there a practicable way down. To it the one trail on the summit led inexorably. Near the brink I now noticed what I had not observed on coming up — a division of the path. A stout pole lay across one division which dropped perpendicularly down between two immense rocks. "That," thought I, "is plainly a bar to that way,

and very considerately done; so I'll take the other." This brought me in a few yards to a narrow, vertical crevice or chimney in a huge rock at the summit's edge. I looked dizzily down. The bottom of the crack opened on a narrow shelf six or seven feet below, against the face of the cliff, where I supposed the trail would be found up which I had climbed; for there was nothing in the general look of the spot different from several ticklish situations that I had encountered on my way up. So, turning face inward to the rock and holding by both hands to the upper edge, I let myself gingerly down through the crevice toward the shelf. It proved farther down than I had reckoned, and my feet dangled in the air short of it. I was afraid to loose my hold and drop, lest, on landing, I should pitch backwards into the cañon yawning greedily beneath; for the shelf was only a foot or so wide. Hanging by my fingers, I groped blindly with my feet for some intermediate lodgment for them, and, to my relief, one foot found rest on a jutting corner of rock none too firm, and the other in a V-shaped crack in the boulder face. Then, taking a fresh grip with my hands somewhat below the first, I sought to swing my feet clear and plant them on the shelf of my hopes before relinquishing my hand-hold. To my alarm, however, the foot in the crack refused to come out. My weight had wedged it firmly in the crevice, and all my tugging and pulling failed to budge it.

It was an unhappy predicament — this being hung over a gulf of air, like Mahomet in his coffin. The Prophet's case was more tolerable, because he

had angels to wait on him; but the only angels I felt myself worthy of counting on might be some chance party of mountain-climbers from Switzer's — an uncertain hope. My pinched member was already beginning to complain, when it occurred to me that if I could unlace the shoe, I might pull the foot out of it. Cautiously reaching down with one hand while I clung to the rock by the other, I had just succeeded in securing the loose end of the shoestring, when the rotten granite that imprisoned the foot suddenly gave way and I was standing palpitating on the shelf beneath. Peering over the edge for the continuation of the trail, I was dismayed to find that there was no trail — only the cañon's gaping maw. I had followed a blind lead and was at the jumping-off point on the face of the precipice. It was the sort of situation one dreams of after too rich a supper. Here was actuality, not to be awakened from.

There was obviously but one thing to do: to climb back again to the top. Waiting awhile for my shaking nerves to steady themselves, I addressed myself to the task. There was so little in the way of projection to catch hold of, and that little so treacherous, that it proved ticklish business, but, by dint of using knees, elbows, toes, and finger-tips, I managed to worm my way slowly up the cramped chimney. Once, indeed, I slipped back, through an insecure hold, but in the main the crumbling rock face held, and at last I crawled out on a little patch of dried herbage where I threw myself with a thumping and thankful heart. But I had still to solve the problem of the way down. A careful examination of the sum-

mit's rim brought me always to the place of my adventure or to that embrasure in the rocky edge where the restraining pole lay, as the only possibilities. With so small a space to search in, it seemed ridiculous that I could not find the way of exit that an hour before had been my way of ingress. Was the spot bewitched? As I stood in my perplexity, I had a sudden illumination. The bar across the crevice was not a barrier, but a hand-hold by which climbers pulled themselves up the last, vertical pitch — an aid which I myself must have employed, but which, in the excitement of arrival at the summit, had quickly and completely gone out of my consciousness. To slip down the cliff's rugged cheek, clutching at such scant shrubbery as lent a hand, was now the work of but a few minutes, and once on solid ground again, I took the trail for Colby's. The sun had set, and dusk darkened the cañon bottom. Out of the depths there rose the mellow music of a house-dog's bark.

IV

COLBY'S

COLBY'S RANCH is in a rincon at the head of Coldwater Cañon, and the sides of the hills drip marvelously with springs. These gather themselves into a limpid brook, which, after dutifully lending itself to the service of irrigating the Colby orchard, garden, and alfalfa patches, turns again to its wildness and hurries to self-effacement in the waters of the Big Tujunga River, a mile away. Because of this wealth of water, Colby's is perennially green. Colby himself had been a prospector, who in 1891 drifted into the Tujunga Basin from the desert; and, liking the look of this moist little corner and the idea of a stable home on fertile soil, better than the thirty-six dollars a day in gold that he was washing out of the Tujunga placers, and which could not be eaten, he filed an agricultural claim on the cañon. As he was a man of vim and resource, and Mrs. Colby a woman of the same qualities with some eminently feminine ones added, the ranch came to be in time the little Canaan of the Sierra Madre — a land of milk and honey, of cherries and figs, of apples and pears and berries, of rhubarb pies and peaches and cream — to all of which the public was invited at a modest rate of board. While other mountain resorts depended upon tins and cartons, or at best must have their green stuff brought up

THE HEART OF THE SIERRA MADRE

from the valley at the risk of wilting Colby's grew its own, and was capable of a chicken dinner at an hour or two's notice any day in three hundred and sixty-five. Until a few years ago, when the heart of the Sierra Madre was made a Game Refuge and all shooting prohibited, venison stew and quail on toast were rather matters of course in season. Trout still have a place on the table if there is anybody about who does not mind a three-and-a-half-mile jaunt to the falls of the Tujunga to catch them; and prowling foxes, coyotes, bobcats, and mountain lions add a finishing touch of gaminess to life in Coldwater Cañon.

After passing within Colby's gate I was brought to a standstill by the menacing bulk of a huge Saint Bernard dog, the thunderous rumble of whose growls must have announced to the house my arrival; for a door quickly opened and a man in shirt-sleeves and slippers looked out. In reply to my inquiry if I could be accommodated overnight, he said cordially:

"You bet you can; come right in to supper."

He proved to be the cook, who in the absence of the proprietors was in charge of the ranch. He was plainly glad of a visitor, and joining me after supper talked with nervous incessancy, punctuated by long-drawn inhalation of cigarettes, which, one after another, he tossed away half consumed. His conversation showed him a man of culture and wide experience of life, and I wondered what jolt of fortune had landed him in the kitchen of this out-of-the-way mountain resort. The next evening he invited me to stroll with him down the cañon to a turn in the

lane for a view of the sunset light dying on the summit of Mount Gleason, and then he voluntarily unbosomed himself of his history.

He was, it appeared, of a prominent Pennsylvania family, some of whom had acquired fame for achievements in intellectual pursuits. He himself had been educated in the schools both of America and Europe for a mechanical engineer, and had at one time been of some distinction in his profession. Evil communications, however, had brought him to grief. He became a dipsomaniac; his business fell away; his wife left him. Time and again he pulled himself together with the help of his old father, but only to fall again; and now for six months his father was dead. So, turning his back on a world of temptations and "all shot to pieces," as he expressed it, he had sought out Colby's; and in this Vale of Avilion he was now endeavoring, on milk, mountain air, and cigarettes, to heal him of his grievous wound. Between him and the big Saint Bernard an interesting intimacy existed. "Love me, Leo?" I overheard him say to the great, grave brute. A deep growl from Leo. "Love me a little bit, Leo?" — this, plaintively. More growls from Leo and a fierce roll of his glowing eyes, accompanied by violent waggings of the tail. "Is that all you love me, Leo?" — reproachfully; and Leo rose up with a yelp of anguish at the impotence of his voice and tail to do justice to his affection. Being something of a sentimentalist, I was inclined to regard the little episode as one more instance of that peculiar affinity that so often is found existing between dogs and human derelicts.

Perhaps it was; yet it is to be remembered that there was a cook in this case.

Here and there in the Southern California mountains are small areas of cultivation which seem less of California than of Pennsylvania or Virginia; where in winter there is occasional snowfall and the ground occasionally freezes. While from the Eastern standpoint it is a mild version of winter, it is enough to bar the orange and the palm. Colby's is one of these. Its apple trees and stone walls, its rambling post-and-rail fences, its verdant swales whose lush grasses are mingled with horsetails and bordered with meadow-rue and goldenrod, its fern-fringed springs and mossy rivulets — all this smacks noticeably of the East. So does a delightful old lane banked with tangled bracken and wild roses, with water gurgling in a cressy ditch beside it, and where at close of day the tall evening primroses pop their big yellow eyes wide open while you watch. In these green pastures and by these pleasant waters, I found Colby's superannuated mare Nellie, just as old as the ranch and a coöperator in the making, rounding out her well-spent years on pension. These, too, were former hunting-grounds of Frisky, a rheumatic old tabby cat turned nineteen the year of my visit, who in his prime also collaborated in the ranch activities. His department was gophers, of which he has been known to catch as many as ten in a day, bringing them one at a time to lay at his master's feet. Now his hunting days were over, and most of the day he would be found dozing on the kitchen step.

Where the lane ends, trails begin that lead you where you will in the wild, shaggy watershed of the Big Tujunga — up Mill Creek and over the shoulder of Mount Gleason to Acton and the Mojave Desert twenty miles away; or to Loomis's place on Alder Creek, at the foot of Mount Pacifico; or straight up the Tujunga to its sources under Pine Flats. Or, if you desire a rugged adventure, you may descend the Tujunga Cañon, clambering as best you can around several waterfalls that drop more or less precipitously from the cañon's granite jaws; until by and by you meet the old road near Hoyt's Ranch that comes in from the valley of San Fernando, the timbers of whose ancient mission, they say, were brought from the Tujunga over a century ago by the sweating *mansos* of the Padres.

After midsummer, and until the rains of the latter year begin, these are thirsty ways and you will do well to have always a full canteen at your side. Yet at these altitudes — three thousand to five thousand feet — there is a physical pleasure in the very dryness, and a stimulus in the intense sunshine, tempered as it is by the breath of the sea which draws up the cañon; and when now and again the trail winds down from the sunny heights and passes for a leafy space through alders and cottonwoods to some spring that breaks from beneath a bank where lilies and columbine, stream orchis and woodwardia cluster, you appreciate the miracle and divine gift of water as you never can in a land of abounding moisture where it is accepted, like the sunrise, as a matter of course. The sunny trail sides, too, are

bright with many flowers of sorts that thrive only in droughtiness and have joy of dry feet — mariposa tulips, golden-hearted thistle-poppies, lilac snapdragons, and the lovely white salvers of the wild tobacco. Violet-crowned monardella blesses you most christianly with the return of a sweet fragrance as you crush it under your careless feet. Upon the dimpling slopes of dark chaparral there lies in early summer a special beauty — a warm blush of cinnamon brown occasioned by the seeding of the thickets of greasewood.

In the winter, they say, the Big Tujunga becomes often a boisterous, ungoverned torrent. During storms, and for days afterward, it goes thundering and gnawing at its banks, ripping out trees, undermining rocks and cracking them together till the sparks fly, rolling great boulders around like marbles. The stream may then be a hundred feet across and twenty deep, and the sound of its fury may be plainly heard a mile away; but with the passing of the rainy season its passion is forgotten, and in July, following its tortuous course for miles, I found it in tenderest and most lovable mood. Now it would be rippling past gravelly beaches open to the sun, now idling in the still shadows of cottonwood and willow; now, slipping round a corner, it would widen out and sparkle through a setting of sedgy mead under perpendicular white cliffs, suggesting a miniature Yosemite and returning echoes to my call; again dropping musically by proper little cascades from rocky shelf to shelf, it would gather comfortably in drowsy lins of restfulness. Yet there are sterner

features, too, as, where breaking its way through some cross-wall of the mountain, it passes between colossal gateways of bald, gray granite, with huge, flat-topped boulders of a man's height or more, lying scattered about. They are rounded of edge and polished by the waters of none knows how many centuries to a glistening smoothness, and make you think of the cluttered tables, divans, and footstools of some deserted council-room of primal gods, left hastily.

V

THE UPPER TUJUNGA AND THE WOODS OF LILLIPUT

"OF course," said my friend the cook as he added to my breakfast the crowning grace of a stack of hot cakes and flanked it with a jug of honey, "of course, traveling light as you do, you ought to figure on John Opid's camp for to-night, though it's a pity while you *are* out not to see the Upper Tujunga and the Chilao country — it's fine around Chilao — but there's only a camper's cabin or two over there and if nobody's home you are dished, see? You ought to have come with a burro and been independent."

He sat down on the corner of a table, lit the inevitable cigarette, and looked at me with genuine concern.

"Tell you what you *could* do, though," he went on shortly — "tell you what you *could* do. You could go on to Loomis's place, and put up there to-night. His women-folks cook all right; then to-morrow, with a couple of sandwiches in your pocket, put out for Chilao, and after that Pine Flats would be easy by dark. There is a ranger's station at Pine Flats. It ain't his business to take care of travelers, but Bill's a good scout all right and he'd see you did n't die in the night. If he did n't happen to be home, you could make a fire and sort of curl up around it and get through the night well enough; only keep one of the

sandwiches for breakfast. A fellow can do anything once. Then you could make John's that night, you know, and sleep it off. Or, what's better yet" — warming up to the luxury of giving gratuitous advice — "cut out Pine Flats and keep on from Chilao to Buckhorn Flats; spend your night there and then on to Coldbrook Camp on the North Fork of the San Gabriel. There might be campers at Buckhorn to help you through the night; but anyhow, as I say, what's one night out? It's no killing matter; and all that part is prize country. You ought n't to miss it — particularly Chilao."

Somehow I thought so, too. Chilao was a name that fell alluringly upon the ear, and an ancient Indian mortar on the Colby porch, brought from there, had whetted my curiosity about the place.

After an early breakfast, I struck into a trail that wound back and forth across the Tujunga, there a placid, shadowy stream very different from the bouldery, cascading water below Colby's. Now and then a decaying cabin of shakes split from the forest, or a monument of cobbles weather-worn and tumbling, spoke of some forgotten miner's aspiration of yester year.

In the dirt floor of one such roofless shack, beside a broken fireplace up whose chimney I could fancy the smoke of many a golden pipe-dream once ascending, a wild rose had rooted and was blooming — Nature's sowing of beauty for ashes. On the hillsides along this trail a pine began to appear which finds its best development at an altitude much higher — the Coulter pine, one of the characteristic

conifers of the Southern California mountains. A smallish tree, somewhat resembling a young yellow pine, it is unmistakably distinguished by the remarkable cones. These in perfect specimens are about a foot long, half that in thickness, and solid enough to kill you should one drop on your head—a not unlikely occurrence in a gale. They are, I believe, the heaviest pine cones known and frequently attain a weight of six or eight pounds. Their deadliness as a plaything of the wind is increased by the rigid, claw-like hooks that terminate the scales and bristle on all sides of the huge burs like spikes upon some barbaric war-club. Because of the monster cones, the mountain folk generally speak of the tree as the big-cone pine, but I like best to think of it as Coulter pine — the name botanists record it by (*Pinus Coulteri*), in honor of its discoverer, one Dr. Thomas Coulter, a doughty Englishman — or was he an Irishman? — who visited the Pacific coast in the wild 1830's, and penetrated some of the roughest parts of California in his quest of plant novelties. His memory is preserved in a long list of plants including that most glorious California wild flower, *Romneya Coulteri*, the Matilija poppy.

An occasional side stream, obviously doomed not to last the summer, trickled downward from the cañon slopes and across my path. Beyond one of these, called Wickiup Creek, the sparse woods winked out entirely, and the cañon widened into an open, sunny, bowl-like valley with gradually receding sides patched to the rim with chamise, manzanita, mountain lilac, and sumac, the sun-scorched

interspaces of chalky white ground marked with the thin forests of Whipple's yucca, then in fruit. A vast, silent solitude this, whose scant summer waters, often algæ-covered, are void of trout, and so offer no lure to anglers and campers; the soil so arid that the desert sage — *Artemisia tridentata* — is thoroughly at home here, forming thickets a man's height — a rarely beautiful plant which would be more valued, I think, if less common, and if its beauty were of a more conventional type. I have never heard campers speak of it except depreciatively, but they will snap off its soft, gray, plumy branchlets for beds to lay their blankets on, and fragrant, springy mattresses they make, too. The short, thick trunks of old plants are serviceable for fuel when better is lacking; and as for twirling-sticks for fire-making before matches were, Indians thought nothing better, it is said, than the small, dry stems of this desert sagebrush.

At the junction of the Tujunga with Alder Creek a high-line trail goes north, and affords glorious, unobstructed views over a world of sunlit chaparral. Only here and there along some ridge, or in a damp rincon where moisture lingers, is a tree to be seen. None the less, this pygmy growth is a forest in its way, and like any forest serves the important office of catching and conserving moisture from winter storms, saving the hills from denudation, and helping to keep alive the springs and runnels of the mid-year with what else would have wasted away over bare slopes. Once the mind is cleared of its conventional views as to woodlands, this Tom Thumb

THE UPPER TUJUNGA, LOOKING TOWARDS PINE FLATS, IN THE SIERRA MADRE

forest appeals to the eye as very lovely, leafy the year through, rounded and dimpling as it compliantly conforms like a garment to the moulding of the mountain to which it clings, yet with a decided will of its own as you will find if you step from the trail and attempt to pass through its midst. Self-possessed and uncompromising chaparral John Muir calls it, somewhere. In a moment you will be wedged tight in the embrace of the tortuous, interlocking branches, your clothes torn, your flesh scratched and bleeding, your sense of direction quite confused. A man sunk below his eyes in chaparral may become as completely lost as in a tropical jungle. For all its littleness it is infinitely harder to travel than the giant forests of the Sierra Nevada, where the trees stand apart at liberal distances, while these puny arboreal folk of the chaparral, linking arms, could halt an army.

An infinitude of color tones lends interest, too, to this shaggy mantle of the sierra, changing with the progress of the day and of the year — purple and mauve and ashes of rose, and every shade of green from limpid emerald following the early storms to the olive of the latter year. For weeks in the spring the multitudinous flowers of the mountain lilacs spread a veil of white and blue over hundreds of acres in a block, and the sheeted bloom of the chamise lies upon the bushes like snow out of season, until June. In a smaller way, clambering white clematis and penstemons in scarlet, purple, and blue, mariposa tulips in lavender and yellow, golden dicentra, blue larkspurs and red, orange and yellow

monkey flowers, yellow and white chænactis, violet snapdragons, monardellas, and sages of many sorts — all these and more enliven the chaparral with color and light and bring it the music of murmuring bees and hummingbirds and other winged folk.

Loomis's lies at the foot of Mount Pacifico and at the headwaters of Alder Creek — twenty acres or so of fruitfulness in the wilderness — and is of later origin than Colby's. A modest legend on a board at the front gate advertised it as "a four-bit" place — fifty cents for a meal and the same for a bed. Walking through a riotously flowery garden to a flower-embowered house, I was welcomed by the proprietor himself, a powerful figure of a man with grizzled head, who introduced me to his motherly-looking wife, his daughter and little grandchild and a woman boarder. There is always an interest, I think, in knowing what leads men to cut loose from the crowd and set up their lares and penates in out-of-the-way places; and as my host and I sat on the porch, looking down the valley of Alder Creek, while supper was preparing, he enlightened me as to his past. He had, in his day, it seems, been a miner, an engineer, and a Los Angeles chief of police. Fond of hunting, his outings had brought him, a few years before, to this remote nook where he had found a tillable bit of land cheek by jowl with a gold prospect. So he filed an agricultural claim on the former, put up a house and barn, and what with the produce of the land and the output of his mine, supplemented by what boarders he could get, he had so far managed to eke out a living; but it was no easy life.

"You see," said he, "we have real winter up here at a mile above sea level, and being so far from a grocery store and two weeks between mails and all, it makes hard sledding for the women-folks. Perhaps you did n't notice that sundial as you came up the walk?"

I had noticed it and my curiosity had been excited by the imprint of a baby hand and foot on the base and this inscription:

ROSE LUELLA

BORN

ALDER CREEK

APRIL 28 1915

"I must tell you about that," he explained. "Rose Luella is my granddaughter, and along in that year, when she was getting due to be born, we planned to get the mother out on horseback to town; but it was a stormy winter, and because the snow no sooner melted off the ridges than it came on to snow again, it got so we could n't get her away at all; and so the little un just naturally had to be born on the premises. Some event, you bet you. And so, we thought we'd celebrate it in a new way; and when the dial base was set up and the concrete still soft we took the baby out — mind you, she was just ten days old — and made her mark on it with her bit of foot and fist. Kind o' cute, don't you think? Sometime, when we're all gone from here, people will wonder how it got there."

VI

CHILAO AND BEYOND

IN making my inquiries to Chilao, I made a vital omission. I forgot to ask how I should know Chilao when I arrived there. My host Loomis had hospitably borne me company to the edge of his land and set me on the trail. "You can't possibly miss the way," said he, "for there is n't any other." And so free of all care on the subject, I sauntered along fellowshiping as a mortal shadow myself with the long, cool shadows of the pines barring the sunlit floor of the thin forest. After some hours, I found myself in a cool, shaded pocket of the hills, where, to my disconcerting, my trusted trail split in two, one division going north and one going south. On a tree near by a trio of Forest Service signboards pointed three ways — to Loomis's, whence I had come; to Horse Flats, in which I had no interest; to Pine Flats, where I was not yet ready to go; but as to Chilao, my immediate objective, there was no word at all.

"The stupidity of these forest rangers," thought I irascibly. "Every signboard for a dozen miles back has had something to say about Chilao when it was n't necessary; and here, in a howling wilderness where there's never a soul to ask a direction of, they drivel of Horse Flats and Loomis's."

I sat down at the base of the tree and studied my pocket map. It was as unilluminating as the wilder-

ness about me, and my choler toward the Forest Service rose to cover governments in general. To my relief I heard just then a mellow voice far away among the trees trolling to a familiar melody this old-time ditty:

> "O Californ-i-a, O that's the land for me,
> I went to California, my washbowl on my knee."

The song continued, growing more and more distinct, until shortly I was cheered by the sight of three pedestrians descending the trail from the direction of Pine Flats. They were all men rather past middle age, each carrying a knapsack. The singer, who was in advance, was of portly build, with a frank, open, ruddy countenance, clean-shaven, his head surmounted by a straw hat of network pulled well down over his ears. From his broad shoulders there hung, besides the knapsack, a pair of saddle-bags, which rested on his chest, and in one hand he carried a hook-handled walking-stick of a fashion common enough on city streets, but which I had never before seen in the wildwood.

As the trio reached the bottom of the trail, the singer paused in his song, looked admiringly about the pretty spot, and exclaimed heartily, "My word, but this is bonny!" — and I knew him infallibly for an Englishman.

Saluting them, I asked if they could direct me to Chilao, adding some testy comment about the deficiencies of signboards. The Briton replied mildly that doubtless a board of direction was deemed unnecessary, for I was then *at* Chilao!

"A general term, as I understand it," he went on, "covering a considerable area about here. Beyond the base of yonder hill is a pleasant campground among pines with a brook running near, where we are contemplating making a halt for a rest and a bit of luncheon. Perhaps you will join us?"

They proved to be an interesting company. Two of them — the Englishman and one whom they called Doctor and who was noticeably neat in a spotless suit of khaki — revealed themselves by the use of *thee* and *thy* between themselves as of the people called Quakers; the other turned out to be a Mennonite of Dutch ancestry, born in Russia, educated in Philadelphia, and latterly a teacher in the Los Angeles public schools. They were out for a few days' leisurely holiday, their beds and board upon their backs. As we munched our sandwiches around a few sticks of fire where a can of water was boiling for tea, the talk ran racily over a variety of subjects — California history, the French language, Swiss travel, occultism, memories of good things eaten, the probable reason for dignifying this bit of unsettled wilderness with a name, and what Chilao, as a word, meant anyhow. As we speculated upon this last matter, it happened that a forest ranger came along and pulling in his horse, stopped to pass the time of day. We referred the question to him.

Throwing one leg comfortably over the horn of his Mexican saddle, he settled down for a talk.

"The only man I ever knew who had an answer to that," he began, "was Lew Newcomb, who owns a quarter-section of private land just beyond here.

He's the only man that lives hereaway and he is n't here half the time. They call him the Mayor of Chilao, when they want to be funny. You'll pass through his claim on this trail, and a pretty piece of woods it is, take it from me. Well, Lew knows this neck of the woods for thirty-five years back, and *he* says" — here the ranger paused to roll a cigarette and light it — "*Lew* says the name is n't rightly Chilao at all, but Chil-ee'-yo,[1] which was the nickname of a Mexican herder who used to run cattle up here. It's Mex for one of them little hot chile peppers that nearly blow your head off. Well, the way the old fellow got that name was peculiar. You see, one day he run a bear up a tree. Well, he had n't any gun with him, only a long knife, and he wanted that bear bad; but not enough to climb the tree for it; oh, no, you bet you; and the bear he was satisfied not to come down. So, Mr. Mex, being in no hurry, rolls a cigareet and sets down on his hunkies to think it over; and by and by he got an idee, like a Mexican will, if you give him time. He just rustled a pile of wood and built a hot fire under the tree, and as it died down a bit he'd chuck on another armful. So, after a while, it got all-fired hot for the bear up there, and because he could n't climb any higher, he just naturally had to slide down to the ground, d'ye see, to get clear of the heat, and then the Mexican quick knifed him. It was pretty slick work, you bet you; so the other Mexicans, who are pretty handy making up nicknames, got to calling him 'Chilee-yo,' which you might say is the same as we say 'Hot

[1] *Chilillo*, Spanish diminutive of *chile*, the red pepper.

Stuff.' Some of his people are living yet, they tell me, down Duarte way, but the old boy himself is dead."

Our forester rolled another cigarette, and, as he drew it across the tip of his tongue to moisten it, there was a reminiscent smile on his face.

"Asking how places got their names," he went on, "reminds me of a little adventure I once had in that line. Down in the Laguna Mountains in the Cleveland Reserve, there's a place they call Burnt Rancheree — a pretty little valley as ever you see. I was there once with some of the boys trail-making; and one night, when we was all setting around the fire, smoking and chewing the rag, it just occurred to me what a devil of a queer name that was, and so I said so. And Charley Brown he up and says, says he, 'That's easy,' he says, and went on to tell how there used to be some Indians had a village there — you know, that's rancheree in Spanish — and some white fellows drifted in there, run the whole band off the land, and burnt down their houses, which, of course, was rotten business and against the law. 'Why did they do it?' says I. 'Why did they do it?' says he; 'what's that got to do with it? I'm telling you that's what happened, and that is why the place is called Burnt Rancheree.' Well, somehow the blamed story stuck in my noodle, though it was no affair of mine; and one day, thinks I, I'll ask old — well, never mind his name — he was an old-timer down that way — and if anybody'd know, he'd know. So one day I was riding by his place, and there he set on his front step whittling a stick.

'Now's my chance,' thinks I; so I told him what I had heard and asked him what he knew about it. The old boy blackened like a thunder-cloud and snapped out, 'Who the hell told you that?' 'Some of the boys,' says I; 'ain't it so?' He muttered something under his breath and went in the house and slammed the door after him. I saw it was no fit subject for me to pursue, and rode on more puzzled than ever. Next time I saw Charley, I told him. He stared at me and slapped his knee. 'You blankety-blank fool,' he says, 'why, he was the bird that fired the works!' The joke was sure on me, and cured me of asking questions in those parts. Well, so-long, boys, and good luck to you."

My new acquaintances were planning to camp that night at Buckhorn, eight miles farther on; and the opportunity to share in pleasant company decided me to take that route with them. The trail for miles was now a way of pure sylvan beauty, threading an innocent unspoiled wilderness. Coulter and yellow pines and incense cedars, set about at liberal distances from one another, stood in benevolent dignity, supplying bed and board to happy crews of squirrels and birds. The forest floor, too dry to support underbrush, was so open to the sun that wild grasses were abundant, and down the unobstructed aisles of the wood ahead we sometimes caught sight of deer feeding, to start and bound away as we drew nearer. The trail side, now and then, flamed with the massed scarlet trumpets of zauschneria, the California wild fuchsia, and beside the occasional rivulets wild roses and columbine,

evening primroses and goldenrod were flowering, while the pungent fragrance of monardella, oft recurring, rose from the earth as our feet trampled it. People whose interest in plants is confined to their blossoms are apt to think of plant perfumes as altogether of flowers, overlooking the scores of herbs and shrubs whose leaves and wood are no less delightfully odorous, and more enduringly so. The ancient Hebrews had a broader regard and stocked their gardens not only with roses and lilies, but also with aromatic shrubs, "beds of spices," which, when the wind blew over them, flowed fragrances and inspired the poets. I like that catholic phrase of Scripture, "the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed." That surely was meant to embrace much more than the obvious perfume of flowers, sweet and blessed as that is.

Climbing a divide to the desertward side of the range, we looked by and by into the basin of Little Rock Creek, and, skirting the dry, north slope of Mount Waterman, we got through a screen of pines far-off views of the Mojave Desert where a yellow smudge betokened a sand-storm blowing. And so, sauntering in leisurely fashion and chatting as we fared, we came, as the evening shadows were settling in cañon depth and woodland hollow, to a thicket from whose heart the music of running water rose, and this was Buckhorn Flat. It proved an entrancing spot, a murmurous, odorous, brackeny dell rather than a flat, where silver firs, yellow pines, and incense cedars four and five feet in diameter made a contemplative twilight. Pushing our way through

a fringe of fern to the limpid, bouldery brook, we stooped to bathe our warm faces in the water where lupines and flowering thimbleberry, nodding columbine and lilies made a poetic screen. The lilies were the rather rare *Lilium Parryi*, their lovely bells of clear yellow, deliciously fragrant, and there were hundreds of them flecking the shrubbery of the brookside. A famous camping-place is Buckhorn for the few travelers who pass through that out-of-the-way part of the sierra. A rustic shelter made of pine boughs, in form like a tent low to the ground and bedded with bracken fronds, had been left by some former camper and made a snug fit for two. This the Professor and I, creeping into it on hands and knees, shared for the night. A fire built at the entrance before a wall of rock reflected some warmth within, and I got through the chill hours with such sleep and comfort as could be expected with scant covering at an altitude of six thousand feet.

The next day was Sunday, which we accepted as a day of rest; and at the instance of the Friends we all four sat together for an hour or so in worshipful silence beneath the great firs, hoping to experience the reality of the Lord's assurance as to the two or three gathered together in His name. In such primeval temple, without priestly mediation, the ripple of the brook and the song of birds for anthem and the perfume of the lilies for incense, we made spiritual sacrifice to the universal Lord of life. I wonder if ever before was Quaker meeting held in that far sierra — or since.

VII

ISLIP AND THE CAÑON OF THE WEST FORK

THE principal stream of the Sierra Madre is the River San Gabriel. A bird's-eye view of it from its myriad sources to the point where it breaks from the mountains into the plain is not unlike a symmetrically spreading tree. A system of small creeks and inconstant rivulets, draining an area of perhaps a hundred and fifty square miles of what John Muir called "the most tumbled-up lot of mountains he had ever got into," discharge their waters into some half a dozen perennial streams, all flowing with remarkable regularity almost due south. These in turn empty into the San Gabriel's West and East Forks, whose flow as indicated by the names is at right angles to these feeders. This vast tangle of watercourses represents the crown of our tree; and its trunk is formed when the east and west branches, uniting, drop abruptly southward through a majestic cañon ten miles to Azusa, where the mountains are left behind.

From the crest of the range eastward from Buckhorn a vast view is opened before you of that watershed of the San Gabriel, and of its noble valley stretching to the Pacific. At intervals during the summer, low fogs roll in over the valley, blotting it out completely. Such a fog was in, that morning following my Buckhorn Sabbath, and I looked down

upon a billowy *mer de brouillard*, spreading mile upon mile east, south, and west, and glistening in the early sunshine beneath a sky of Italian blue. A wide, silent polar sea it seemed, of snowy heaves and dimples held in suspension, a field of dazzling whiteness unbroken except where the topmost peak of Santiago, fifty miles away, pushed up and lay like an island solitary in the midst. So profound was the sense of solitude and remoteness, it was hard to believe that beneath that veil of vapor a human world was turning out of bed and preparing for its daily adventure of living.

Fetching a circuit among the toes of some high peaks northwest of San Antonio, my trail brought me with the waning day to Little Jimmy Spring high up under Mount Islip's peak. Here a few years ago, on the edge of a grassy, flowery *ciénaga*, a cartoonist, employed by a New York newspaper, camped for a couple of seasons seeking to recruit his broken health. By way of camp sign he painted upon the barkless trunk of a shattered tree hard by the quaint owl-like features of his pictorial creation "Little Jimmy," the hero of a long series of adventures reproduced in the comic Sunday supplements and breathlessly followed week after week by the youth of that day. The name seems destined to stick to the spring, and possibly these lines of record will serve to solve for the curious the enigma of its origin. As queer in its way is the name "Islip" borne by the mountain out of whose shoulder the spring bubbles. It has nothing to do with a slip down hill, as the amateur etymologist might guess, but commemorates one George

Islip, an old-time mountain man and hunter, once well known in the San Gabriel Cañon region. The story goes — the question of its truthfulness I leave to the first who told it — that an unscrupulous Los Angeles lawyer dubbed the mountain so in a fit of repentance for having beaten the widow Islip out of a certain claim, and so made a sort of left-handed amends for his unlawful gains.

The peak is one any one might be proud to have named for him. Its summit, 8240 feet above the sea, commands a superb outlook over the heart of the sierra and as far as the ocean on one side and the desert on the other. On its northern slope is born and cradled the South Fork of Big Rock Creek, which, if you could follow it, would bring you in a dozen miles to the Devil's Punchbowl, a wild depression on the confines of the desert, with irregular sides of upturned sandstone, titanic in proportions, and in texture curiously suggesting petrified dough or taffy, as likely a place as you would find in a week's travel to stage a murder or a bandits' meeting.

Thereaway Big Rock Creek has been joined by its other fork heading under North Baldy, and is a clear, trout-haunted stream of generous volume, which breaks out of the foothills by a wide, gravelly wash into the desert, there to end its visible career. This is unquestionably the creek to which Lieutenant Williamson, leading an exploration party in 1853 along an old Spanish trail that had for many years skirted the northern base of the Sierra Madre, gave the name of Johnson River, in honor of one of his soldiers who had scouted it out. As Rock

Creeks are plentiful enough to be confusing, it seems a pity that the name of that thirsty old campaigner who discovered the pretty stream should not have been retained for this one.

In the springs and *ciénagas* of Islip's southern slope the North Fork of the San Gabriel has its rise; and up there in a forest of cañon live-oaks and stately alders, lily gardens and waterfalls, in a riot of ferns, primroses, columbines, and epipactis, is one of the most charmingly situated of all the mountain camps in which to while away a holiday, with fishing, wild-flower hunting, mountain-climbing, and napping in a hammock under the trees. This is Coldbrook, a cheerful little village in summer of canvas tent-houses, past which Soldier Creek, as hearty, exuberant a water as you often encounter, goes brawling to the San Gabriel. It is one of the attractions of Coldbrook that it is but two miles from Crystal Lake — the one natural pond of the Sierra Madre. This is a still, unemotional tarn, pocketed in a sort of crater, the native emerald of its tepid waters stained around the borders with brown of pondweed. There is no apparent inlet or outlet. In the shallows near shore myriads of little fishes — a sort of chub, I believe — leap and dart about, and deer wade daintily in to drink, mingling their graceful reflections with those of the pines and big-cone spruces that clothe the precipitous sides of the bowl in whose bottom the lakelet lies.

The dining-room of the little hotel at Coldbrook was temporarily out of business when I arrived half famished before its locked door; but a couple of

comely girls in overalls and Stetson hats, who, I have reason to believe, were the cook and chambermaid, and who seemed to be in sole charge of the camp, consented, out of the kindness of their hearts and for a consideration of "six bits," to toss me up a dinner. Among all the sights of Coldbrook none had power — not Crystal Lake nor Triple Falls nor the flowery trail up Soldier Creek — to stay so vividly in my memory as the vision of those two pitying females in man's attire, the one cooking corned-beef hash over the stove and the other laying the table where I sat expectant.

Coldbrook has the further distinction of being the terminus of a wagon-road from Azusa, which follows up the North Fork of the San Gabriel from Camp Rincon. This Rincon occupies a shady flat near the Forks of the San Gabriel, and is a place of popular resort from the beginning of the fishing season in May until the rains of autumn make fords impassable. Under the trees within sound of the shallow river tumbling along its bouldery channel, are tents and cabins where you may bring your wife and babies, buy supplies at the grocery store on the premises, and keep house in cool simplicity while the valley simmers in heat; or, if your finances permit, there is the camp dining-room. This at the time of my visit was presided over by Jim, the natty Japanese chef, and Max, a loquacious parrot. Max occupied a cage by the door, and his business was to dispense somewhat of that cheerfulness which dietitians recommend as a concomitant of all meals. His method was to utter a string of idiotic remarks

CRYSTAL LAKE IN THE SIERRA MADRE

punctuated with uproarious shrieks of laughter. When these became unbearable, a green sweater was clapped over the cage smothering him with darkness; whereupon after a raucous "good night," emitted as from a tomb, the silly bird would subside into silence.

There is at Rincon a neat little cottage bearing the legend "Ranger Station" and flying the American flag. The ranger's wife looked disapproving — the ranger himself was away at the time — when I inquired about the trail up the cañon of the West Fork. "Can you swim?" she asked grimly. All *she* would trust herself to was the high-line trail along the crest far above the cañon; she was like a cat and liked dry feet. The cañon of the West Fork, a gorge some twenty miles in length, had been represented to me as one of the most beautiful in the Sierra Madre. I could not be content with a look at it; I must put my feet in it; and dry-shod or wet, I would. As a matter of fact, the forebodings of my Cassandra of the ranger station proved groundless, for the passage of the stream was easy enough, though I could realize that at high water there would be no traveling it. As usual with cañon trails this one backed and filled across the stream. For a dozen miles it was all but obliterated, and but for a forest ranger having recently gone up the cañon on horseback I should hardly have known there was a trail. No sooner would my eyes grow accustomed to the faint track through the scrub and rubble bordering the water, than it would disappear in the creek and have to be searched for on the other side. Luckily

the water was low and by stepping from rock to rock I could usually get across without a wetting. By actual count there proved to be one hundred and twenty-seven of these crossings between Rincon and Camp West Fork, twenty miles on. The stream was very tortuous, hugging first one wall of the cañon and then the other, revealing at every turn a fresh scene of loveliness ahead. Now the cañon would open out in a sunlit, gravelly flat, where bees were busy in the wild buckwheat, and the miniature orchards of the manzanita hung heavy with their crops of tiny, rosy-cheeked apples; again it would narrow in shadow, and I would be threading a sylvan dell where live-oaks, alders, ash, and sycamore made a cool twilight, and the moving stream paused in a still, transparent pool, in whose depths shadowy trout floated motionless over a bottom of white sand. Mosses, ferns, and moisture-loving herbs clothed the sheer cliffs with verdure at their foot where perpetual shadow was; above the tree-tops every seam and wrinkle of the shadeless heights bore its growth of yerba santa, yucca, sumac, or mountain mahogany, scant but lusty.

I found something stimulating in the sight of those sturdy plants subsisting frugally outside the zone of life's fat things, yet managing to draw fruitfulness out of the aridity and unpromising barrenness that most plants shun. They seemed the analogues of ascetic men who seek to breathe a purer air above the crowded thoroughfares of the world. Yet the waters of the stream, I noticed, spoke a different tale. So long as they mingled companion-

ably together in the general channel, they ran sweet and wholesome; but here and there a trickle, as though dissatisfied with its company, disengaged itself from the mass and in aloofness set up an exclusive pool under the bank. Soon stagnant, its ultimate fate was extinction. Evidently it was unsafe to dogmatize hastily.

In such philosophic mood I was overtaken by a young man who, it turned out, was a college student spending his vacation in the solitude of the cañon, studying to make up some deficiencies of his last semester, and incidentally serving as fire-guard. He had the *entrée* to a ranger's cabin vacant for a few days, which we reached after a couple of miles, when he invited me to spend the night with him. We pledged a continuing friendship over a mulligan of tinned corn, beans, and tomatoes, thickened with fragments of stale bread, from our absentee's cupboard. I ate my share in simple faith that my comrade was not exceeding his privileges.

VIII

THE LUCK OF PABLO MIGUEL

NEAR the West Fork Ranger Station a trail sets off up Short-Cut Cañon, a stiffish five miles to Barley Flats — a favorite objective for hardy walkers and offering beautiful outlooks over the interior of the range. "Flats," however, is a deceiving term as applied to it, for, in all its two miles or so of length, I failed to notice one proper flat singular, let alone flats plural. It is, in fact, a rolling plateau, grassy and flowery, at an elevation of about five thousand feet, to which a sprinkling of cañon live-oaks and yellow and Coulter pines gives a certain parklike aspect. This is heightened by the frequent presence of the California mule-deer, which find choice picking on the wild barley, as mountain people call the characteristic grass that makes a thin carpet under the trees and over the sunny interspaces. (You realize the appropriateness of the mule-deer's name when you see one's great mulish ears go up the better to catch news of you.) In early days, the tradition is, Barley Flats was a "bad man" rendezvous, where bandits and cattle-rustlers could rest from their activities with little chance of being surprised by the sheriff's men, and where their stock was always sure of fattening forage.

As I sauntered about enjoying the beauty of the

view and the pleasant company of murmurous pines, my eye was caught by the stooping figure of a man in a dip of the hill ahead of me. He was engaged in collecting into a barley sack the huge, clawed cones that had fallen from the Coulter pines. Near by stood a packed burro, with erect ears, mildly interested in my appearance. At my salute the stranger straightened himself up and nodded. He was a short, bandy-legged chunk of a man, with twinkling eyes and an honest, frank look in his countenance, his soiled dress betokening one who had been a long time away from a clothes-brush. Nevertheless his face, save for a neat pair of mutton-chop whiskers, was newly shaven — a fact that would have surprised me had I not already discovered that even in solitary places, with nobody looking on, a self-respecting man does the things that preserve his self-respect, and that with some men this means a clean shave every day or two.

He tied his sack on the burro's pack, and then, looking me over, he remarked:

"I reckon you're not far from home; you seem to be traveling light."

I said I expected to stop overnight at Opid's in the West Fork, which I thought could not be over five miles away.

He squinted his eye at the declining sun.

"I thought I was going to make Lowe to-night; but I won't now. That's why I was gathering these big cones. Tourists like 'em, and when a bunch gets started they buy 'em like hot cakes at two bits apiece. You see, they only grow here and there

about the mountains, and this is the nearest they are found to the valley. Yes, sir, I've been out for four months prospecting about the mountains and the edge of the desert — and nothing to show for it but these cones, by George."

He pinched some crumbs of tobacco out of a waistcoat pocket, filled a corncob pipe and lighted it.

"Gold?" I inquired.

"Yep," he replied, sucking at the pipe, "or any old thing. But, Lord, I don't much mind. I've been broke before — me and Joe. Eh, Joe, old stockin'?" — putting an arm around the burro's neck and slapping it affectionately. "There's no big thing to be made here, I guess, but you never can tell. Life's a great gamble, partner. It's interestin', though; and if you play it fair, I've a notion there's some stake for everybody; but it comes different to different people; sometimes like the luck of Pablo Miguel."

"I never heard of Pablo Miguel," said I; "what was his luck?"

"That's a long story," he replied, knocking the ashes from his pipe against a rock and carefully grinding them into the ground with his heel. "What's hindering you from stopping overnight here with me, and we'll spin the yarn over a fresh pipe after a bit of supper. I'm plumb hungry for somebody to talk to besides the donkey. I've some odds and ends of grub left, and with a good fire my blankets will do for the two of us."

I fell in readily enough with this proposal, for the

night was now so near that I was reluctant to start out on an untried trail. Besides, this stranger interested me with his honest manner. We made camp beneath a fine old oak, a short distance from which, under the hill, was a spring. Joe, relieved of his pack, was hobbled and set adrift to browse and doze away the night, while we "rustled" firewood and started supper. There were flapjacks, a nubbin of bacon, hot chocolate, and a topping off of dried dates — the last two items being my own contribution. This dispatched, a couple of dry logs were thrown on the fire, sending a fine sparkle up into the night, and I reminded my comrade of the promised story.

He lighted his pipe, broke the match in two and thoughtfully dropped it into the blaze. In the firelight his face shone ruddily, and, if I mistook not, there was a shade of sadness on it.

"'Pablo Miguel's luck' was a saying in our family, which I remember from a boy; and the story as I had it was one of my father's, which he had from the Spanish people. So it is n't a first-hand yarn, and you'll have to use your judgment about believing all the details. I pass it on as it came to me. Fact is it's a sort of double-barreled tale, and begins with Frémont when he and his soldiers were camped at the San Fernando Mission and were figuring on marching to Los Angeles and making California part of the United States. You know that was in 1846 and the war with Mexico was on. Well, sir, you bet all the Spanish folks were scared, thinking for sure the Americans would loot the town

as soon as they got into it. There were n't any banks in those days, and anybody lucky enough to have any coin had to hide it, to be sure of keeping it. If there was much of it, a favorite way was to put it in an old olla and bury olla and all in the unlikeliest place you could think of.

"Well, as I was saying, there was an old codger in Los Angeles by the name of Florencio Rodriguez, as miserly an old cuss as ever was, who lived in a little adobe house with his daughter near the Plaza. For all his poor mouth, for he was always talking of the hard times, everybody as good as knew he had a fortune of money hived away somewhere about his lot. So when Frémont's men were reported within twenty miles of the pueblo, old Don Florencio was sure in a panic, and what to do he did n't know. What he did do, as it turned out, was to load his *dinero* in a sort of chaise — what the Spanish people call a *calesa* — under a pile of hides, and with a stout mule in the shafts he lit out in the dark of the moon, for the country somewheres. He got off so quietly that nobody saw him go or what direction he took. However, the next evening but one, back the old fellow came riding in the empty *calesa*, and so dead played out that he just naturally went to bed, would n't talk, had a stroke of apoplexy, and, by George, up and died completely, before they could get the padre to him — just plumb scared to death, d' ye see.

"Well, as I was saying, his daughter that lived with him was a widow woman with a little girl baby, and of course she was n't curious as to what had

become of the old man's money, oh, no! But after a hard day's hunt all she found was a hole under the flooring of Don Florencio's bedroom, which was pretty plain Spanish for saying he had moved his pile to another place. But where? Evidently somewhere within a day's mule travel of Los Angeles; but even that meant a lot of territory. Well, after the surrender, and the Gringo peril turned out to be no peril at all, and things got sort of settled down again, of course everybody began to speculate about old Don Florencio's money, and being none of their business it worried them a good deal for a while not to know where it could be; but guessing got them nowhere, and by and by most people forgot about it. But the old fellow's daughter did n't, and when her child grew up so as she could be told about it — her name was Soledad, and then some, but Soledad will do for this story — the mother would often hash the affair over with her and say what a fine thing it would be if the money could be found, for it would be sure to bring her a fine husband. But money or no money, after a while Soledad had a mind to marry, and the happy man was this Pablo Miguel who kept a barber shop near the big hotel on Main Street. My father knew him well, and used to say he was as square a young chap as you would find in all California — good-natured and obliging and very temperate. Of course that's not saying he was a teetotaler, but if he did get drunk, it was a gentlemanly drunk at a wedding or such a matter, and he would go to bed till he sobered up. And stranger yet, he did n't gamble — a good enough catch for any girl.

"Now Soledad was a trifling piece, and so much talk about her grandfather's money had turned her shallow pate, and she put on more airs than a sure-enough heiress; and so one day she told Pablo the pesos were waiting somewhere for somebody to dig up, and if he did n't find them for her she'd give him pumpkins, which is Spanish for the mitten, you know. Poor Pablo was half wild, for he was dead gone on the girl, and to be set to find a bag of Mexican dollars just somewhere in Los Angeles County, nobody knew where, was a devilish large order, let me tell you.

"Well, sir, the upshot of it was that the poor devil said he would go for love of her, and stick to the job till he found something or come and tell her. So one morning he locked up his shop, boarding up the shutters — for he knew he was in for a long hunt — and set out on horseback driving a pack-burro with his blankets, a pick and shovel and some camp stuff, and headed for this here Sierra Madre. It seems, from what my father used to say, that Pablo had a long head, and he figured it out that, as the old man had been gone two days, he had likely been as far as the sierra, which was fifteen miles away and in those days as wild as the Irish, and had hid his bag of pesos in some cañon. The likeliest one, he thought, was the one the Mexicans called Cañon Blanco — what we call Millard's. You see, that was the cañon that they say Diablo Joe Chapman, in the hire of the padres of San Gabriel, got the timbers out of for the Los Angeles Plaza church, bossing a gang of mission Indians who did the heavy

work; and as Don Florencio, like most old curmudgeons of his kidney, was a powerful church-goer, Pablo believed the old boy would naturally feel his money was best hid in a place that had a bit of religion to it. But, Lord, you can see for yourself, Pablo was beat at that game before he began, and he wore out his pick and himself to skin and bone without so much as starting a clue. Once in so often he would ride back to Los Angeles to have a chat with Soledad, and then off to the hunt again.

"Now there was an old Mission Indian had a shack somewhere in the foothills, where he was pottering out his days, and Pablo, who was plumb-afoot for company sometimes, used now and then to drop in on him to pass the time of day and maybe share a mess of rabbit. So one day, as the pair were sitting at the door smoking cigarettes and half asleep, the Indian sort of waked up and pointed to the mountain. 'See there, *compadre*,' he says, 'the Holy Cross of San Gabriel.' And sure enough, following the direction of the Indian's finger, Pablo could see very plain against the east side of a cañon — it was the one just east of Eaton's Cañon — the outlines of a big cross, apparently cut into the mountain-side. Strange to say, he had never noticed it before, although it had been there all the time; but you know how it is with such natural curiosities, all depends upon your state of mind and the angle of view. Anyhow, there it was as plain as the nose on your face; and the Indian told him the story of how it got there. It seems when the padres first came to this part of the country and

built San Gabriel Mission, they were disturbed a great deal by earthquakes, so that it is a matter of history that for some years the mission was called San Gabriel of the Earthquakes, or whatever that is in Spanish. Well, the Indians or the padres, or all of them together, laid the cause of the shakes to the spite of a demon who naturally objected to holy water on his ancient domain; and so it was decided to call on the Archangel Gabriel, as the patron saint of the mission, to put the devil to rout. And sure enough, as the Indian solemnly assured Pablo, the archangel tracked the demon to that cañon, ran him into a cave, clapped the earth on him, and made that big sign of the cross [1] over the place to keep him in. Then the earthquakes stopped.

"Well, sir, as I was saying, Pablo was no fool, and he no sooner heard this legend than he slapped his thigh and said to himself, 'By the' — whatever his favorite swear word was, for I have forgotten — '*that's* where Don Florencio hid his money!' So he jumps on his horse and off he goes, burro and all, to camp in the Cañon of the Holy Cross. It was hard to see the cross when he got in the cañon, but he made out at last to locate the place among the brush, and he started in digging in high hope. But though he dug off and on for a week, he got nothing for his pains except holes in the ground. 'Well,' he thinks to himself, 'the jig's up; and unless I can persuade Soledad that I'm worth having without this cursed

[1] This cross may still be faintly seen from certain parts of the valley; but it was much plainer before a fire some years ago swept the cañon side and partially obliterated the cross-bar.

money, I'm booked for pumpkins all right.' Then sitting down on the hillside he rolled him a cigarette, and had such a fit of the blues as never was, looking all the while down the little cañon across the valley. For, as I say, he thought the world and all of the girl.

"It was a fine spring day, and the air was cool to the cheek, sweet with the smell of flowers, and the birds were singing to beat the band. Pablo had been so busy with his treasure hunt that for weeks he thought of nothing else, just like a business man in town; and now that it had ended in failure, it suddenly occurred to him what a pleasant world it was, after all, this corner of California, that he was looking at and had n't been seeing. The cañon was as pretty a ravine as ever you see, with a wonder of ferns and flowers and fine timber, and its mouth opened out into a broad, grassy flat, as green as an emerald and big enough for a little farm and orchard. A goodish-sized stream, that headed under a cliff near the cross, flowed in the bottom of the cañon and could easily be turned to irrigate the flat. There were miles of wild land near by along the foothills where a man could run a few cattle, if he had them; and if he wanted to keep bees, there was the whole flowery sierra at his back for a honey pasture. 'Fool that I've been!' he thought. 'What more could a pot of money do for a man than what is here at my feet for the taking?' (for you know in those days, this foothill land was considered worthless; it was only the valley land that had value, and a man could squat at pretty much any cañon mouth and nobody would disturb him); 'I've as good as

found the old man's treasure, after all. I'll go back to Soledad, and, if she is as sensible as I think she is, we'll get married without more ado and start in to make a home of it.'

"Well, to cut a long story short, Pablo rode back to Los Angeles, as happy as a lord in the prospect of life on El Ranchito de la Santa Cruz, for he had already a name for the place. He had been away about three months and was looking pretty ragged; so at San Gabriel, he stopped for a shave, a hair-cut, some clean clothes, and a new sombrero. So when he rode up to Soledad's door, he looked *bastante guapo*, quite the sport, my father used to say."

Here my host stopped short. His pipe was cold, and as he relighted it he looked rather quizzically at me out of one corner of his eye.

"Well?" said I.

When he had the pipe well under way, he went on:

"Well, it was a woman he did n't know who opened the door, and she told him Soledad did n't live in Los Angeles any more. Two weeks before she had married a rich cattle dealer of Sonora, and she and her mother had gone with him to live in Mexico."

"And that is the end of the story?" I asked.

"You bet," said my host.

"But where's the luck come in?" I asked. "You started off by talking of Pablo Miguel being lucky."

"Sure I did, brother, don't you sabe? Don't you think it a piece of luck for an honest man to be saved from marrying a woman like that?"

He knocked the ashes from his pipe, got up, yawned, and opened his blankets. Tossing me one,

he rolled himself in the other and stretched out with his feet to the fire, looking up through the trees at the stars. Presently he said:

"All the same it was rotten luck, too; for some men can be hard hit in a way that it is n't just any woman that will do. Poor soul, he never went back to his cañon, and they do say he died a bachelor. Man does n't live by bread alone, brother. Good-night."

He turned his back, and in a few minutes his deep breathing betokened sleep.

Somehow I had a feeling that I had been listening to a touch of autobiography.

IX

OUT BY STURTEVANT'S TRAIL

THREE miles from Barley Flats is the Red Box on the divide between the head of the West Fork Cañon and the cañon of the Arroyo Seco. Though it is only a receptacle for storing picks, shovels, and what not for forest rangers and fire-fighters — a red box by a cañon's brim and nothing more, as Peter Bell would see it — it is nevertheless to frequenters of the mountains a landmark of importance. Here is the parting of the ways for many points — for the Arroyo Seco, for the Upper Tujunga, for Mount Wilson, for Eaton's Cañon, for the camps of the San Gabriel River. Four miles and the man in a hurry may be at Alpine Tavern on Mount Lowe, whence an electric car will whisk him in two hours to Los Angeles; but if he is not in a hurry, a pleasant, roundabout way to the valley and the town is to take the trail down into the cañon of the West Fork, past Opid's; and, following the pretty, trouty stream in the shade of alders and sycamores, he comes by and by to that West Fork Ranger Station whereof mention has been made, and there the Sturtevant Trail to Sierra Madre Town begins. That was my way, and, mounting out of the cañon through a ferny forest of oak, I traversed a divide into the cañon of the Big Santa Anita. Then I passed out of the trees into a world of chaparral

slopes that fell in soft, liberal waves to the great valley, and, as I turned a bend of the trail, lo! on the far horizon the sea, shining in the sun. The suddenness of the sight awoke in me a long-forgotten schoolboy memory — that joyous cry "the sea! the sea!" of the home-bound Greeks from Persia, which Xenophon tells of, when the Euxine burst upon their view.

A beautiful trail is this of Sturtevant's, passing from shadow to sunshine and from sunshine to shadow again, its higher stretches companioning the tumbling waters of a foamy, energetic mountain brook, the Big Santa Anita, called Big, as I take it, not because it is really big, but because the Little Santa Anita is less. Clinging to the slopes of the gorge, in the cool twilight cast by big-cone spruces, bays and water-maples, are the cottages and cabins of city folk who thus take their mountain air with a dash of home comfort. These are sometimes clustered so thickly as to seem a sylvan village, and perched about as they are amid the crags, with the musical waters cascading below and a waterfall of respectable dimensions close by, they have a touch of the alpinesque. For the itinerant two or three boarding-camps, as Sturtevant's, Roberts's, and Fern Lodge, display the bush of hospitality at a price, their supplies brought up on burro-back from the mountain's foot. Woodwardias, most regal of Southern California ferns, crowd the stream borders, and in favored situations rise in graceful fountains of green to the height of five feet or more.

Again the trail passed out of the woods, and the

last two or three miles lay baked in sunshine that summer day; and, on reaching a little trail-side refreshment booth near the base of the mountain, I was glad to mount a stool, stow my legs under the counter, and wait my turn to be served by the proprietor, a humorous-looking little man, enveloped to the chin in a huge check apron. A girl in soiled breeches was asking for a glass of water.

"Water?" said he of the apron. "You mean the stuff that runs under bridges? Sure."

The girl laughed and, after draining her glass, thanked him.

"Sure you're welcome, sister. Now have one on the house. No? Well, come again. Now, son" — turning to me — "what's your trouble?"

As I discussed my sandwich and noggin of hot tea, he leaned sociably on the counter, and, there being no other customer just then, he proceeded to entertain me.

"You can patch your old clothes and make out, but you just got to have grub. Once I was holding down a claim in Minnesota, and the grub give out. I was broke — dead — had n't a cent in my jeans, only two pup dogs. I put 'em in my pack-sack, and hoofed it to town, twelve mile, mebbe sixteen, I don't just remember now; and the first saloon I come to, I broke in and put one of the pups down on the floor, and I says, 'Two dollars takes the dog.' They was a gambler there and he perked up and says, 'Done,' he says, 'I'll take a chance,' and planks down his two balls and gathers in the dog. Next saloon, I put down the other pup, and says, same

way, 'Two dollars takes the dog,' and the barkeep — he was sort of lonesome, I guess — he says, 'I'm elected,' and that made me four dollars, see? Well, sir, I turned it into grub *pronto*, you bet, and lit out for home; and say, when I set up that little old sack of flour agen the wall, them red and yallow letters on it was the prettiest picture *I* wanted to see — believe *me*. You see, you just naturally *have* to have grub."

Here he wiped off the counter with the slack of his apron, and perched himself on the edge.

"Greasers has some cute ways," he went on, apropos of nothing. "First time I eat Mexican cooking was on the Gila River in Arizona. I was driving stage in them days — horse stage, you understand; and the river was on the rampage that day, and the ford being 'dobe I was afraid the team would stall in the middle; so instead of going back to Tucson, there was a rancheree of Mexicans near the ford, and thinks I, I'll see what these Greasers is like. So I tied the team to the fence, and slipped over to where they was having supper. Well, there was a woman squat on the ground cooking *tortillas* — that's a sort of corn cakes, you know — on a bit of sheet iron over a morsel of fire, and a bowl of *frijoles* thin like soup setting near, and that was supper, and it was free for all, including me. There was n't no spoons or knives, and I was stumped for a minute. Thinks I, 'I can rustle the cakes all right,' thinks I, 'that's easy, but how the blazes am I to get my share of the bean soup?' So I just laid low and watched a Mexican man that was there, and

what do you think, he just naturally doubled his *tortilla* over like a shovel, scooped up some beans, juice and all, bit it off, swallowed it, and did it again till the *tortilla* was eat up, and then he started another. Simple enough, was n't it? Of course, I caught on in no time, though I was a little sloppy at first. You see, one strong point about that way is it saves washing up the silver.

"Yes, sir, you have to learn everything once. Once I did n't know what 'savvy' meant; thought it was Chinese. And there's shrimps. I never seen or heard of shrimps till one day I was in 'Frisco and went into a restaurant. They had 'em setting around in bowls, and how to get into the damned things stumped me. I did n't say nothing, just looked around the room leisurely, taking in the sights. There was a fellow there having some, and I noticed he took 'em in his fingers, twisted one end off like, nibbled a mossel of meat that stuck out, and threw the rest away. So I just followed suit. Well, the proprietor he'd been watching me, it turned out, and he says to me, he says, 'You're the smartest tenderfoot yet; most of 'em puts salt and pepper on 'em and tries to cut 'em up ladylike with a knife and fork.' Oh, yes, I've had my experiences. Some folks say I ought to go on the stage; and I tell 'em I was once for four years. 'You don't mean it?' they say; 'where?' 'Down in Arizona,' says I; 'I drove!'

"Got to go? Call it two bits. So-long and be good."

It was dusk when the street-car dropped me half

a block from home. People were picking up their evening papers from the lawns and glancing over the headlines as they walked slowly back into the house. A piano tinkled somewhere; there was a general smell of supper in the air, and the happy calls and laughter of romping children. It is pleasant to go a journey; and pleasant, too, to be home again, once more "in the jolly brotherhood of the world."

HERE AND THERE IN THE SANTA BARBARA NATIONAL FOREST

Every walk is a sort of crusade preached by some Peter the Hermit in us to go forth and reconquer this holy land from the hands of the infidels.

THOREAU, *Excursions*

I

THE PASS OF TEJON AND MOUNT PIÑOS

BETWEEN the western tip of the Tehachapis and that tumbled mass of the Ventura ranges which begin in the huge humps of Frazier Mountain and the Tecuya is the cañon that used to be known as La Cañada de las Uvas, but of recent years as the Tejon Pass. By right of priority the latter name belongs to another pass, some fifteen miles to the east, by which Lieutenant Williamson and his exploring party, in 1853, made a crossing of the Tehachapis, finding there, as he expressed it, "a wagon road leading to Los Angeles, and it is one of the worst roads I ever saw" — which, from the pen of a man knocking about the California mountains nearly seventy years ago, is a serious charge. The Lieutenant, hearing of the better pass to the west, scouted it out, and, though it made the journey to the pueblos of the south somewhat longer, it proved so much easier for wheels than the road by the Tejon that the latter was more and more neglected, and before long even the name was taken from it and superimposed on this Cañada de las Uvas. Such is the testimony of old maps.

This way nowadays the paved highway between Los Angeles and Bakersfield goes; and where once the sweating pack-trains and oxcarts of the pioneers toiled in dust and weariness; where later Greek

George goaded his ungainly camels;[1] and the six-horse stages that linked San Francisco with St. Louis went clattering — to-day motor-cars and auto-stages whiz through at half a mile a minute, and now and then an aeroplane descends. In the heart of the Pass gleams Castaic Lake, a pond of harsh, mocking waters, which, in the summer of a dry year, may disappear, leaving a bottom of white, choking dust across which you can ride your horse. It is a lake of gruesome memory; for old-timers will tell you that once upon a time some exasperated white men, of the type that modern lynchers are made of, drove a whole village of Indians, men, women, and children, into it, because it was assumed that some of the number were responsible for the murder of the cook and a boy at Fort Tejon. There they drowned like rats, and the bodies of the dead wretches, mummified by the mineral in the hard water, are said to have bobbed up at intervals for a long time, a ghastly reminder to other redmen that on occasion their white brethren can be savages, too. To-day the cattle of the Ranchos Tejon browse

[1] The maintenance of the Southwestern army posts in the 1850's, dotted about as they were over thousands of miles of desert and semi-desert, was a knotty problem to Washington. The bright idea of introducing camels for transportation of supplies awoke in some governmental head — Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War, had the credit of it. So camels were got from the Old World, and a herd of them, with a couple of Greeks and a Turk for drivers, were for a time quartered on the Rancho Tejon near the Pass, during General Edward F. Beale's residence there. The experiment proved a failure, for, as Mary Austin has put it in her charming chapter on the Ranchos Tejon in *The Land of Little Rain*, no American can love a camel; and, after stampeding cavalry horses to a degree that became tragical, the lumbering beasts were loosed to the desert, where, it is asserted, a few of their descendants still exist and frighten the unsuspecting.

about the green margin and ruminate in the shade of the fine valley oaks for which the region is famous — the *Quercus lobata* of the botanists. One of these trees I had the curiosity to step off one day, and found it something over eight feet through at the butt, its pendulous branches full of grace touching the ground on all sides, like the drapery of a tent; but the best have been rudely handled by the years, their tops and sturdiest limbs often shattered or completely torn off by wind and snow, or eaten away by the canker of mistletoe.

All about are rounded hills, or lomas, rising in baldness, the grassy sides and crowns glorified in spring with solid sheets of golden color, the bloom of the little plant baeria. Later the breath of the desert (only a few miles away) scorches all these slopes, and July finds them changed to a wan, washed-out yellow or burnt chrome touched with dull crimson, and the baked earth cracks with dryness as your parched lips do. From the hills overlooking the desert you may see sights that have power to shock you awake from the most confirmed apathy. Such was one that greeted us on a rainy morning as we drove up Bouquet Cañon from the south, and, crossing the crest of the mountain, began the descent. A low cloud hung over us spilling showers of moisture as they scurried past aslant, impelled by the wind. Then as we rounded the toe of a hill, behold, ahead of us a perfect rainbow low to the earth bridging the cañon with the precision of a bit of engineering, and beneath it, but afar, the shining sands of the desert reflecting the sun.

Then, there is the surprise of the wild bloom which in April spreads over those uncultivated wastes in solid masses of color — the blue of lupines, the sunny yellow of baeria and desert dandelion, the tempered white of creamcups and gilias, the intense orange of poppies, each sort by itself massed acre upon acre. You have read of the waste places blooming as the rose and now your eyes see the fact flashed out of the void. Most striking of all are the poppies, which here, at the Mojave's western point, are of a hue fairly fiery. I recall a hillside covered with them one overcast April day, when dark cloud masses big with hail and wind rolled down the mountains about the Pass. Under such conditions the petals of the flowers rolled up tight, and each blossom stood separate from its fellows, a veritable tongue of flame whipped by a wintry blast. Up the slope of the hill they leaned and strained, and at the crest scintillated and danced, a quivering red line of flame silhouetted against the black background of the storm. The hill seemed fairly ablaze.

The names of the doers of first things naturally interest us. I should like to know the name of the pioneer redman who discovered the Tejon Pass, but doubtless that will never be brought to light. As to the first white man to penetrate it we have some evidence, and it points to one Don Pedro Fages, *comandante militar* of Alta California, who in 1772 passed through to the Tulares of the interior in search of truant Indian neophytes from Mission San Gabriel. Four years later the remarkable missionary traveler Padre Garcés, less interested in Indians'

bodies than their immortal souls, footed it into those same tule plains of the solitary San Joaquin, "where the sun rose and set as on the high sea," turning thither from San Gabriel, and doubtless following the same trail through the Tejon. The Tulares swarmed with Indians in those days, and one thing above all others that contact with the white interlopers taught them was a taste for horse-flesh. To stampede the mission herds, cut out a "bunch" of horses or mules, and rush them through the Tejon for a feast came to be a regular part of gentile life. Later, when the gold strike on Sutter's *rancho* set all the world atraveling, the Pass got a good share of it and became an established thoroughfare between the north and the south.

That Fort Tejon of the murdered cook was an army post of some importance from 1854 to 1864, and enjoyed the unique reputation of being the only Southern California army post where snow fell. It was also for a time a station on the famous Butterfield Overland Mail route, whose six-horse stages, traveling night and day, did the trip between San Francisco and St. Louis via Los Angeles in twenty-three days. To-day the Fort is little more than a name and a memory, though some remnants of adobe wall stand here and there, and at least one fairly whole building of the former barracks, to invite the curious. The site of the old post is a charming, grassy bowl in the hills, four miles north of Castaic Lake, and through its midst flow the sweet waters of a brook beside which in the shade of the great oaks the soldiers of Uncle Sam once lolled

and smoked their pipes, killing time as best they could. Sometimes, too, they died there. This I realized one day when my toe struck some broken fragments of stone which on examination proved to be a marble slab shattered by cattle's stamping hoofs, and marking, as the dim lettering showed, the spot where the mortality of one "Thomas F. Castor, First Lieutenant, Company A, First Regiment, U.S. Dragoons. Died at Fort Tejon, Sept. 8, 1855, aged 35 years," awaits the last reveillé.

One wonders what they talked about, those old campaigners far from home, their words gone down the wind these many years. Of one topic we may be sure — gold, for the desert was just over the hill with its will-o'-the-wisp stories of treasure. It is said there was a popular one about the Lost Mine of the Padres that particularly affected the Fort. You may guess its essentials without my going much into detail — such tales are in the main alike the West over. The incidentals in this case, I believe, involved a *manso* (as the Christianized Indians of the missions were called) of San Fernando stealing in under cover of the night by undivulged trails with a sack of little gold nuggets to replenish the Church funds withal, which so often ran low under the greedy demands of the secular Government; and then, when the blow of secularization fell, and the *mansos* were scattered and swallowed up in the wild life of the hills again, the secret of the gold's source was lost with them, though the tale of it survived, and still lingers, to spur prospectors and vagrant treasure-hunters to a hopeless quest; for there is slight reason

RUINS OF OLD FORT TEJON, THE ONLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ARMY POST WHERE SNOW FELL

to believe that the Franciscan missionaries had any regard for gold except to fear it and its baleful influence on their labors as vineyardists of the Lord.

Across the highway from Castaic Lake is Lebec, pretty much summed up in a store, a garage, and a pretentious wayside hotel where the Los Angeles–Bakersfield stages stop to refresh their passengers. The name of this hamlet of the Pass is a tribute to the memory of one Peter Lebec, who nearly a century since dramatically entered into eternity beneath an oak tree at Fort Tejon, where a grizzly bear found him overcome with drink and ignobly dispatched him. At least so a white historian has put the matter, but the Indian tradition is more charitable. This is to the effect that Lebec, who was a far-strayed French *voyageur* and one of a party of trappers, shot a grizzly under this tree, and thinking it dead stepped up to skin it, when Bruin, who was not so dead as he looked, arose and killed the man. However that may be, there Lebec died and there he was buried by his comrades, who hewed from the tree-trunk a broad flat surface and carved upon it the laconic legend:

PETER LE BECK
KILLED BY A BEAR
OCT. 17, 1837

The Tejon at that time, it seems, and long after was a notorious rendezvous of grizzlies, which found the abundant autumnal droppings of acorns much to their liking, and at all seasons refreshed themselves at sundown from the unfailing brook. I confess to

finding my fancy stirred by the carving of Peter's epitaph in that wildwood of long ago by mountain men in leathern shirt and leggins, moon-faced Indians, fat and stocky, looking stolidly on as the hunting-knife cut deeply into the hard wood. Sixteen years later, Blake, the geologist of the Williamson expedition, came upon the tree quite unexpectedly, and considered the inscription noteworthy enough to include in his official report. "A durable monument," he pronounced it; and doubtless it is as to the monument, but not as to the epitaph; for the bark little by little grew over the bared surface, eclipsing at last the lettering entirely.

The Lebec tree is known, and stands at the northeastern corner of the old parade ground. I was introduced to it not long ago by an old Californian who lived near by, and who entertained me one wet morning beside his comforting wood fire. It seems that my host's brother and another man, both quite ignorant of the Lebec tragedy, camped near the tree one evening some thirty years ago, and, noticing an upright slit in the trunk, found on inspection that the bark had grown from opposite directions over a great scar, like a slowly closing pair of sliding doors, until the two leaves all but touched. Inserting his fingers under the edges of the overgrown layers, one of the men laid them back and discovered the old inscription. Suspecting that some one must have been buried near, they began digging about, and soon unearthed the skeleton, which they very properly reinterred. The pieces of bark showing the lettering in reverse were placed in the Beale Library

at Bakersfield, where doubtless the curious may still see them in company with other relics picked up on the Ranchos Tejon. To-day on the bared surface of the trunk two or three of the original letters are plainly visible, all that Time has spared us.

Between Lebec and the summit of the Tejon Pass there empties into the Pass a shallow *cañada*, dividing Frazier Mountain from Tecuya, and known as Cuddy Cañon. Cuddy of that ilk was one of Frémont's men, they say, who, after the Mexican War, discovered the little valley with heart of greenery and living water into which you come if you follow up the cañon through the thickets of Fremontia and wild lilac to its head ten miles back in the hills. There he ceased from his wanderings, took an Indian to wife, and lived the half-wild life of a California mountaineer of a couple of generations ago, raising cattle, acquiring land and then more land by the easy-going processes of the time, hunting deer and bear, and smoking his pipe in the chimney corner of wet nights, with his wolfish dogs asleep on the floor beside him — a big-hearted, hospitable Irishman whose memory is still pleasantly remembered. Dying, he left a considerable domain to his half-caste progeny, who yet live thereabout in much the same fashion. Near the original Cuddy homestead, on its little bosky knoll beside the green *ciénaga*, the ways part and you have the choice of two roads. One goes up through Cuddy Valley over the ridge into the San Emigdio Cañon and down to the San Joaquin Valley; the other turns southward to Lockwood Valley and the headwaters of Piru

Creek, or, if you like, will take you into the Cuyamas — a wild country, and difficult for the footman because of the cattle paths that would confuse the very elect.

This latter region had long lured me, principally because in its midst is Mount Pinos, the highest peak in the Santa Barbara National Forest; and one July day, bent upon visiting it, I took that south road and arrived by and by at an abandoned borax mine, a country store beside it harboring a post-office called Stauffer. Here was a tattered Ford about embarking for the farther hills. The man at the wheel was a burly body, with a ruddy, good-humored face, who told me he lived at the foot of Mount Pinos, and if I liked I might board with him. So I got in with him, and half an hour brought us to a deserted village of frame cabins clustered about another idle borax mine, of which my host was watchman. Here he lived with his wife and little daughter, in a rambling house on a hillside overlooking one of the small, secluded valleys that are a refreshing feature of these woodland wildernesses. I was assigned a cot on the porch of a barnlike building which in the times of the mine's operation had served as the Company's store, and still held a slender supply of grocery staples for the convenience of such mountain folk as might be in need of them. Lying in my blankets I could watch the sunrise tip with gold the blue crest of the Ventura Mountains and touch with a passing glory the round top of Mount Alamo beyond the gap through which Lockwood Creek slips to the Piru.

My host was an easy-going soul with a pronounced love for the lower animals, in which respect his wife was a close second. "Don't you spoil that cat by putting sugar in her milk," I overheard her charge him. "I like that," he rejoined. "Who's spoiled her already by warming it?"

"Them cottontail rabbits is homelike about a place," he would say, when the twinkle of white in the brush would betray the presence of one. "When we came here two years ago, they'd been shot up so there wa'n't scarcely one to be seen near the mine property; so I put up 'No Hunting' signs, and they're coming back again all right. On moonlight nights in winter we see them playing about in the snow cute as kittens, or sitting washing their faces with their paws. Then there's the mountain quail with their pretty topknots. They have learned to like the shelter of the barn since nobody disturbs them and take pot-luck with the chickens. And deer — do you know, I like to see 'em feeding with the calves. Some despise them because they are destructive about a ranch; but I tell my wife I can stand up to twenty-five; they won't eat more than I can spare. Oh, yes, it's cold here in winter, you bet you; you see we're about five thousand feet above the sea at this place, and in California altitude makes more climate than latitude. There's frost here nearly every night in the year, and in winter the snow piles up proper enough, believe *me*."

I was not long in learning that he was an old sailor, and one evening, as we sat together on the porch with our feet cocked up on the rail, he sucking

an ancient corncob pipe, he spun me the yarn of his early days. Born in a little seacoast town of Maine, where everybody went to sea that got away at all, he early lost his parents and was bound out to a farmer.

"But, Lord love you, I wa'n't cut out for no farmer. Other boys, when school was out, played ball or went fishing, but I was always kept working; or, if I played hookey, I'd ketch it, you bet you. Well, sir, I decided one day I'd quit; so there was a lime schooner clearing for Boston, and I said to myself, Boston suits me, and I slipped aboard and stowed away on her; and when we gets to Boston, as luck would have it, there was a ship from my home town loading for 'Frisco. Well, sir, to make a long story short, I got shipped for the voyage as deck-boy; and got my first taste of a life on the ocean wave, and, take it from me, it was n't like the song puts it — not by a jugful. It was just a little bit of hell. The stuff they fed us on wa'n't fit for pigs — salt pork that stunk to heaven, and the skimmings of the brine mixed with hardtack. The water was rainwater and more or less mixed with salt water, and it smelled something fierce, too. My stomach would n't stand it, being only a lad, and I used to hook some of the officers' stuff — tinned milk, canned fruit, and such like — when the cook sent me on errands to the lazaret where the stores was kept; and with that and the bread the cook slipped me sometimes, do you know, I outgrew everything I wore in the six months of our voyage.

"The crew was a low-down bunch, foreigners and

shanghaied mostly, signed up for thirteen a month, often mutinous and getting flogged — nowadays the Coast Union has changed all that, thank heaven — and when we got around on the West Coast and put in at ports for repairs or supplies and they'd get shore leave, they'd sure raise hell. I always went ashore with them, for I liked to see the world, but somehow, d' ye know, there was something always kept me from any more than looking on, and I never smoked or drank with them or anything, and managed to follow a clean life, which I often think was strange in the midst of all that deviltry and foul talk and doings. Then, too, scurvy broke out. You've read about that, how the teeth drop out, and your flesh gets so that if you poke a finger in it the hole stays. Take it from me, brother, I was glad enough to get ashore in California and stay ashore for a while. I had a sister in Los Angeles, and she got me a job in a shop; but, do you know, I could n't keep from getting down to the wharf at San Pedro every chance I had to watch the ships loading and discharging; and when I was plumb sick of shore life or had been in a fight or in love, as happened once in so often, I'd ship for a coast voyage and get cured. That kept up till I was twenty-one, and being a boy no longer and not willing to stand for the way men were treated in them days, I quit and became a landlubber for keeps."

He paused and looked meditatively across the valley.

"It's sure strange what controls a man's destiny in this world. Once a Jamaica nigger and his wife at

a port we stopped at wanted the worst kind to adopt me. Just supposing they had?"

One morning — a bright, dewless morning of July — I set out for the top of Mount Pinos, following an old wood road that led from the borax mine over a ridge down into a sagey flat where the plant life of the mountains mingled with that of the desert — manzanita, wild heliotrope, and blazing star cheek by jowl with the fiery red mariposa tulip of the Mojave, *Calochortus Kennedyi*. Dainty navarretias bloomed delicately in lavender and blue in the shadow of the sagebrush. The air fairly sparkled in the early sunlight, and birds and bees filled it with the melody of their choiring. Now and then a horned toad scuttled for dear life from under my feet or a jack-rabbit bounded into sight, and once the shadow of a buzzard hunting fell athwart the path. The road, brush-grown and dim, by and by entered a thin forest of low pines down the midst of which a musical brooklet flowed cantily, and then after a stiff climb the tracks came to a dead stop at a deserted lumber camp. The sagging cabins and gaping sawmill overhanging the brook might have served to lodge another party of Silverado squatters. The only sign of contemporary life was a forest ranger's neat cabin, and even that was vacant.

I was now at the end of all trails, nor was my summit in sight. All I had to guide me was my host's instructions to continue bearing northwest through the woods, pursuing always the highest ridge in view. It was an interesting exercise, that guessing the highest rise ahead among the many that kept

swarming up as I climbed — a modified version of Excelsior, where, instead of the snow and ice and the avalanches that beset the aspiring youth of the famous ballad, I had sunshine, resinous odors, and bird chat, and the companionship of noble pines in a parklike forest clear of underbrush. The gently ascending crests of the ridges which I pursued upwards were sylvan boulevards, bathed in light and bordered by dappled shadows. The top of one attained, it would fall away by a gentle descent to a green, open flat carpeted with wild flowers — with lupines blue and white, scarlet penstemons, Indian paintbrush, golden eriophyllum, mariposa tulips in mauve and lavender. Sometimes the crimson spikes of the snow-plant flamed about my feet; but most charming of all the flowery fellowship were the wild iris gardens that crowded down the sunny swales and up the slopes to the wood's edge like a Lilliputian army with banners, their lovely pale blue petals bowing and rippling under the driving of the passing breeze. A cool breeze it was, even on that midsummer day (the snow may fall on Pinos in August, they say), and it hummed a pleasant tune in the pine-tops to the accompaniment of the rat-a-tat-tat of Señor Carpintero, the woodpecker. I am as poor an ornithologist as Juliet Capulet, who knew not lark from nightingale, but I believe I am sure of a woodpecker.

For a couple of hours every height, though it seemed the ultimate one when viewed from below, proved only a stepping-stone to others ahead still greater; but at last the trees crouched lower and

farther apart, and I came out upon the summit, a square mile or so of undulating, grassy, sedgy heath, rock-strewn, wind-swept, and dotted with occasional tattered pines and silver firs, 8820 feet above the sea. Endearing little sub-alpine flowers clung to the mountain's breast, among them a prostrate lupine whose miniature spikes of blue and white rose only an inch above the ground, and a little bladder-pod or loco-weed — *Astragalus curtipes* — whose crimson, bladder-like pods, mottled with white and lying flat on the ground, strikingly suggested a nest full of birds' eggs. Even more curious I found the pods of another astragalus, also a prostrate plant. They are noticeably beaked and covered completely with a close, white down, and if you do not see them as so many tiny, fluffy chicks you have no imagination at all. This is the plant scientists call *Astragalus Purshii*, and so do honor to one Frederick Pursh, an old-time botanist of German birth and worthy memory, who found delight in studying the flora of the young United States, and something over a century ago embodied the results of his studies on the Atlantic seaboard plants in a book which he ambitiously entitled a "Flora of North America."

Once you are on the broad summit of Mount Pinos, the whole of the Santa Barbara National Forest country comes surging about your feet; and if the condition of the atmosphere is ideally clear — it rarely is — you may see the ocean gleaming in one direction and the desert in the other. Even under ordinary conditions the view is superb enough — a glimpse of the Mojave beyond Lebec, the southern

WILD IRIS GARDENS, MOUNT PINOS, SANTA BARBARA NATIONAL FOREST

end of the San Joaquin Valley with Buena Vista Lake swimming blue in the haze, the tumbled maze of unnamed peaks on the hither side of the Cuyamas, and the misty Cuyamas themselves. Across Quatal Cañon northward, a scant five miles as the crow flies, rises the bulk of San Emigdio Peak. San Emigdio suggests earthquakes. It looks down upon the Spanish grant known as the Rancho San Emigdio, through which runs the great fault that extends irregularly for five hundred miles from San Francisco Bay to the neighborhood of San Jacinto; so that earthquakes on the Rancho San Emigdio may be said to be foreordained. Who the original grantee of the tract was I do not know; but that he was a man of sound Catholic faith none can doubt, for, said he, I will place my estate under the heavenly patronage of that good saint who, above all others, has compassionate regard for sufferers by earthquake. And that is Saint Emigdius, Bishop and Martyr. He, by the way, is annually invoked in a special feast in August in the Catholic dioceses of Los Angeles and San Francisco, in order that God, through his saintly intercession, may be pleased to preserve the land from "terræmotus flagellum" — the scourge of shaken earth.

Nevertheless, earthquakes must needs come, and the fame of one that occurred in January, 1857, is not yet forgotten. At Fort Tejon and along the edge of the desert the ground gaped in places a width of eight or ten feet, it is said, closing again immediately, like the snap of some earth demon's jaws. A prospector, who had passed the night under the Tejon

oaks, was frightened to his feet by the shock just in time to see his blankets and rifle swallowed up and buried forever as the rent closed upon them. An old Forty-Niner, known as Poin, was out with a comrade hunting wild pigeons, and, seeing a flock in a tree, fired, dropping a number, while the rest flew away. At the same instant the tree swayed violently under the effect of the earthquake. Said Poin's friend, "Did you ever see so small a flock of pigeons shake so big a tree?" Then, stooping to pick up his birds, he fell flat on his face. Getting up, very much scared, "Poin!" he cried, "what's the matter with the world anyhow?" And Poin, just as badly frightened, shouted, "Damned if I know. Let's go!" And with that they ran nearly a mile to a house where they found a child, who had been to school, explaining earthquakes to her scared mother. Until then neither of the men had thought of such a thing.[1]

Such scraps of ancient history floated on the current of my thoughts as I ate my solitary luncheon in the lee of a great boulder, and made it less solitary. In a sense, I doubt if there is an absolutely solitary spot in all the world. Some touch of pervading humanity will attach to it, even if it be but a flower tagged by an "Adam of science." The sun had gone into hiding as I sat. Lowering clouds, a chill wind, and some dashes of rain sent me downward in mid-afternoon, and twilight was gathering as I turned the corner of the old borax mine.

[1] *Historical Notes of Old Landmarks in California*, by Wm. F. Edgar, M.D. Publications of the Historical Society of Southern California, vol. III.

My host was whittling a stick on his porch.

"Well, son," he inquired, "how far did you get?"

"To the top," I replied; "why not?"

He looked at me in surprise.

"Well, I'll be blowed!" he ejaculated. "*I* never expected you to find it."

II

WITH THE BEES OF THE SAN FELICIANO

SOUTH from Lockwood Valley, ten miles in an airline, Piru Creek springs from the roots of Pine Mountain (which, by the way, you must note, is quite another than Mount Pinos), and sets out upon as devious a course as any creek of the south that I know. Northeast and east, then south and west, southeast and south again, it brawls and bubbles and frothily plunges, through a maze of crowding, brush-clad mountains and wild gorges, gathering as it goes the contributions of many a transient brook and of a few stable affluents, until, after a hundred tortuous miles, the mountains draw away, and it flows staidly through bottom lands into the Santa Clara River. The mouth is not far from that famous Rancho Camulos, which has a permanent place in California romantic literature as the home of Ramona. The creek's last few miles traverse the Rancho Temescal, which once belonged, they say, to a former owner of Camulos. I find this Rancho of the Sweathouse interesting for two events connected with it. The first is this: The señor of Camulos, it seems, possessed what was known as a floating grant derived from the Spanish Crown; that is, if I understand it aright, it pertained to no one described piece of land, but might, upon the election of the grantee, be located upon any tract of the

stipulated number of square leagues not already inhabited. The place eventually pitched upon — the lower reaches of the Piru — happened to be not absolutely unoccupied, for it bore upon it the wickiup and bean-patch, together with the circumjacent wild preserves, of an old Indian, one Juan José, and his family. Now, strange as it may seem to one familiar with our Gringo treatment of aboriginal obstacles, Juan José was in Spanish law an inhabitant, and therefore a cloud upon the Spaniard's title. So the latter entered into quite human negotiations with Juan José, and — after the consumption of some *cigarros* and a dignified amount of time, we may assume — the Indian agreed, in consideration of the delivery to him of a few head of cattle, to withdraw farther into the hills beyond the Temescal line, where he lived out his days in reasonable content and, I take it, a comfortable sense of undisparaged manhood.

My second bit of interest in the Temescal has to do, not with morals, but with the more popular subject of property. A half-dozen miles above the mouth of Piru Creek an open, sunlit side-cañon comes out of the east, its floor and rounded, retreating sides emerald-green in early spring and spangled with wild flowers, and later all golden with billowy masses of mustard bloom. This cañon is called the San Feliciano by some, the Santa Feliciana by others, and it was in the farther end of it, where it becomes narrower and brushier, that Francisco Lopez, a *vaquero* of the Rancho Camulos, tracking some strayed horses on a day of spring in 1841 (if it

was not 1842 as some historians will have it), dismounted to stretch his legs and enjoy a siesta. Perhaps he had Indian blood in his veins; at any rate, he seems to have had the Digger Indian's taste for roots of the field; and, noticing wild onions growing about, he began picking out the little bulbs with his knife and lunching upon them. As he lazily turned up the dirt, a glitter of something yellow caught his eye, and his fingers closed on some of the little gold nuggets that the Spanish people call *chispas*. He collected several, and when he returned to the ranch and showed his find the news of it quickly traveled. People flocked from all over the south to dig up fortunes with their jack-knives, too, and so was started California's first gold rush, several years before Marshall's more notable one in the north. The excitement was not long-lived, however, as the necessary water was scarce and pickings were scanty; but there have been sporadic incursions into the cañon ever since by hopeful folk, who, the wiseacres say, bury more money in it than they take out.

There is a certain allurement about places where things have had their beginning; so this out-of-the-way cañon of the Feliciano, the stage of the first of those gold scrambles which have been such picturesque features in the development of California, has a special claim upon a rambler with an interest in the tales of other days. Summer was half spent when I first entered it, and it lay still and wan under a blazing sun, its bleached-out grasses being nosed over by a few stolid cattle. A parched arroyo,

SAN FELICIANO CAÑON (VENTURA MOUNTAINS), IN WHICH GOLD WAS DISCOVERED SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE MARSHALL'S STRIKE IN THE NORTH

glistening with white stones — bones of a vanished stream — wound along the bottom. The heat of midday awakened in me a longing for that most refreshing of summer drinks — hot tea; and in search of water for boiling I turned into a small tributary cañon, where a grove of live-oaks gave a perpetual shade. A thread of water in a drying brook filled my tin cup, and I soon had it bubbling over a fire of oak twigs. Dropping into it a pinch of tea from my pocket I had my brew complete, and as I sipped it a little boy in bare feet came silently by on his way out of the cañon. For something to say, I asked if any one lived farther up, and he replied, "Yes, sir; keep on up and you will come to the house in a little minute" — a quaint expression, I thought, betokening a mind that did its thinking in Spanish.

Taking the lad's advice, I arrived shortly at a house among the oaks, vacant and dilapidated. It had the look of a place of importance in its day, built on liberal lines, with a multitude of windows and doors opening upon a long veranda and a general air of decayed gentility. One door stood open and I looked down an entry with sagging ceiling and broken walls into a room with a bed and some tumbled blankets half on and half off. Evidently no one was in. Walking to the back I could see, a few rods away, a smaller house of the ordinary California type, with smoke issuing from a stovepipe chimney. It proved to be the abode of a beeman, whose permanent home was somewhere in the low country, and he was here for the floweriest months of the year tending his hives and extracting honey.

He seemed rather glad of company when he realized I had no ulterior designs upon him, and gave me a hearty invitation to stay.

"You can sleep over in the old house," he said; "there's a bed there and some covers, and, though it's dilapidated enough looking to have staged a murder or two, I can guarantee it not to be haunted. And I've still a morsel of grub left, of which you may have your half if you can stand it."

He pushed me out a chair and, taking another himself, loaded his pipe and settled down for a chat. Evidently bee-ranching does not hurry a man unduly.

"Lonesome? Why, no, not very. I have a telephone and can talk home, and you know what that means. But lately the blamed thing has got crossed somewhere and I can't ring up my wife nor she me, but we've found out that twice a day at certain hours the line is open so we can hear each other just by taking down the receiver. So that's the way we do, and, of course, that helps to keep me happy, for I know how things are going, how the wife is and the children and all. And now, if you will excuse me, I'll just listen in, for this is one of the times."

He picked up the receiver, and, after a few moments' wait, a quick smile overspread his rough features. "How are things to-day, dearie? Did you get a good night's rest?" — and so on through various family concerns, the details of his solitary day in the hills, and then some business matters, for evidently his wife was a full sharer in these as well as

the partner of his bosom and hearth. Though he was a man well along in middle life and by no means of a sentimental make-up, there was throughout his talk a sprinkling of those little terms of endearment which spring involuntarily to young lovers' lips, but which after the lapse of years are too often allowed to fall into the limbo of things taken for granted. It was a novel and pleasant privilege to look on at this twentieth-century version of Pyramus and Thisbe, a broken telephone playing the part of the classic hole in the wall. The conversation terminated suddenly with the shutting off of the wire, and we resumed ours.

The father of my host had been a Forty-Niner and had entered California by way of the Cajon Pass. Like so many of his class, he engaged in a miscellaneous lot of occupations in his time, as miner, cattleman, beeman, saloon-keeper, stage-driver, and so on. It was from him that the son inherited this bee ranch of several hundred acres of scrubby hillside rich in wild honey plants — sages, deerweed, and what not — and I was interested in hearing how the father, a born rover, had managed to acquire and hold on to such a bit of permanent property. It seems the old gentleman, with all his gypsy tendencies, kept a diary in which he set down very methodically the important events of his day. One Blue Monday in Los Angeles, where he had arrived "dead broke" after a disastrous mining adventure in the Black Hills of Dakota, he thought to relieve a fit of despondency by looking over his old book of records, and there he lighted upon the

entry of a loan of three hundred dollars to an acquaintance in Los Angeles from whom he had heard nothing in years.

"Well," to continue the story in my beeman's own words, "the old boy got busy, and soon found out that his friend, whose name, by the way, was Johnson, just then was holding down a job as *mayordomo* at the Camulos Ranch, you know over here in the Santa Clara Valley. Well, Dad he jumped a stage and got there somehow and called on the fellow. Johnson remembered the loan all right, and was white about it; but, 'Lord love you, Bill,' he says, 'I ain't got the money. I'd pay you in a minute if I had. I'm just on wages here; and you know how that is, working for these Spanish people — you get it when you get it and not before. The only thing I own is some honey up a little cañon off the San Feliciano, and half of squatter's rights in a bit of land there. If that's any use to you, we might go up and see it.' So Dad, who'd as lief put in time that way as any, said all right; and, by George, when he saw this little cañon, with its live-oaks and springs and pretty rolling hills all around, he fell in love with it on sight. And he says to Johnson, he says, 'What's your interest in this claim worth, Tom?' And Tom he says, ''T ain't worth a damn, Bill, so far as I can see.' So Dad says, 'Well, if you'll give me what honey you have and make me over your interest in the land, we'll call that old deal square.' 'Why, sure,' says Johnson; and so that settled that part. Well, the rest is like a Sunday-School story. You see, the other half-interest

belonged to Johnson's partner, an old codger named Smith. He lived on the claim and kept bees — that was where Johnson's honey came from. Well, one day when Dad blew into the cañon, Smith was awful blue, hard up for two hundred dollars to send to his daughter 'way back East. She needed it to pay off the balance of a mortgage on the home place that was keeping her awake of nights. Well, Dad was rather flush just then, and he jumped at the chance to buy him out, which he did for the two hundred. So three folks were made happy. After a while he built that big house under the trees that you'll sleep in to-night, and some of us youngsters were born there; but we all drifted off to one place or another and the old shebang is going to pieces. You see, you could n't keep Dad quiet long. Just when you'd think him settled down for life, he'd hitch a span of mules to the buckboard, toss in some grub and a couple of canteens, hello 'so-long,' and put off somewhere, and be gone maybe six months or a year. Then some day we'd see him driving in, maybe with a sack of dust, but more likely he'd be broke, and be fetching along some other old-timer with him dead broke, too. There was old Steamboat Morrison, for instance; they called him that because he was fat and bad in his wind, so that when he talked he had a way of puffing and blowing like a steamboat. Well, old Steamboat, he —"

And then followed a string of reminiscences so irrelevant to even my rambling narrative that I omit them.

The little white cities of the bees that dot so many

cañon mouths and hillsides amid flowery chaparral are a picturesque feature of the California foothills. Beekeeping is one of the most ancient of human occupations, and the sight of the symmetrically ordered rows of hives in the wild places affects the imagination as does the sight of vineyards on sunny hill-slopes, carrying it back to primal days, to thoughts of the brown bees of Hymettus, the honeycombs of Lebanon. My host took me out to see his hives, and his talk, once started on bees, flowed as a river.

"Ain't it wonderful," he would say, "this world of honey that is all about us in the flowers, and big fellows like you and me could n't get a drop of it but for these little chaps the bees. Poor little devils, it's a shame to plunder them as we do, but they keep on gathering just the same. But it's a risky life. I suppose a bee, under perfect conditions, might live a couple of years or such a matter, but in point of fact I don't believe they often last much over two or three weeks — fall victims to one sort of accident or another in the course of business. Why, sometimes, the honey flow in my hives stops entirely in the height of the flower season, just because so many of the field workers have come to grief; and everything is at a standstill until a new brood can be hatched out and sent to the front. Everything likes honey — bears, foxes, squirrels, skunks. The natural way to eat it is in the comb, and some take theirs, bee and all. There's skunks, for instance. It's interestin' the way the skunks get their sweetening. They're sure an infernal noosance in the fall just before they

hibernate, and again in the spring, and if you don't watch out they will clean up your apiary good and proper. The little sinners come around about dusk, and, as I sit in the house here smoking or maybe dozing off, I hear 'tap-tap,' 'tap-tap' — just like that — on the hive. And there, bless you, is Mr. Skunk scrouched down in front of it, his tail over his eyes, and sayin' nothin' — just tap-tapping now and then with his paw. Of course, that stirs up the bees, and out they come a-bilin' to see who's here, and old Skunk just gathers them in for the sake of the honey in their insides. Of course, he gets some stung, but his tail over his eyes like a thatch is quite a bit of protection. After a bit, though, that gets full of bees and pretty warm; so he draws off into the brush and picks the bees out of the hair just as you see monkeys in the Zoo clean up their tails of something else not mentioned in polite society. He sticks to one hive till he can't draw any more bees out, and then he moves on to another. I go up moonlight nights and shoot 'em with a shotgun. There's always something interesting going on about an apiary. Take it from me, if I was President of the United States I'd have a stand or two of bees in the White House garden, and put in an hour every day fussin' with them. It would be a fine relief from the cares of state, you bet."

III

THE DEVIL'S POTRERO

AN objective of interest in the Piru country, to such unregenerate ramblers as nurse a liking for tales of banditry, is a certain retreat of the notorious Tiburcio Vasquez, about the last of those Spanish-Californian *salteadores de camino* who, for a quarter of a century after the close of the Mexican War, were the bane of travelers on the highways of the State. The wilderness of Ventura County, with its tumbled mountains gashed with rugged cañons and clothed with tangles of impenetrable chaparral, would even yet be an ideal hiding-place from the inquisitive servants of the law; and a couple of generations ago it would have been even more difficult of access. The defile of the Tejon, busy, as the times went, with passing traffic, must have been a favorite lurking-place for the gentlemen of the road; and it was not very far from there, they say, that Joaquin Murrieta, the most picturesque of the old-time road agents, was shot to death on a summer day of 1853, and his head, horridly preserved in whiskey and arsenic, attached as Exhibit 1 to his killers' claim for the State's reward.[1] I fancy there are some still

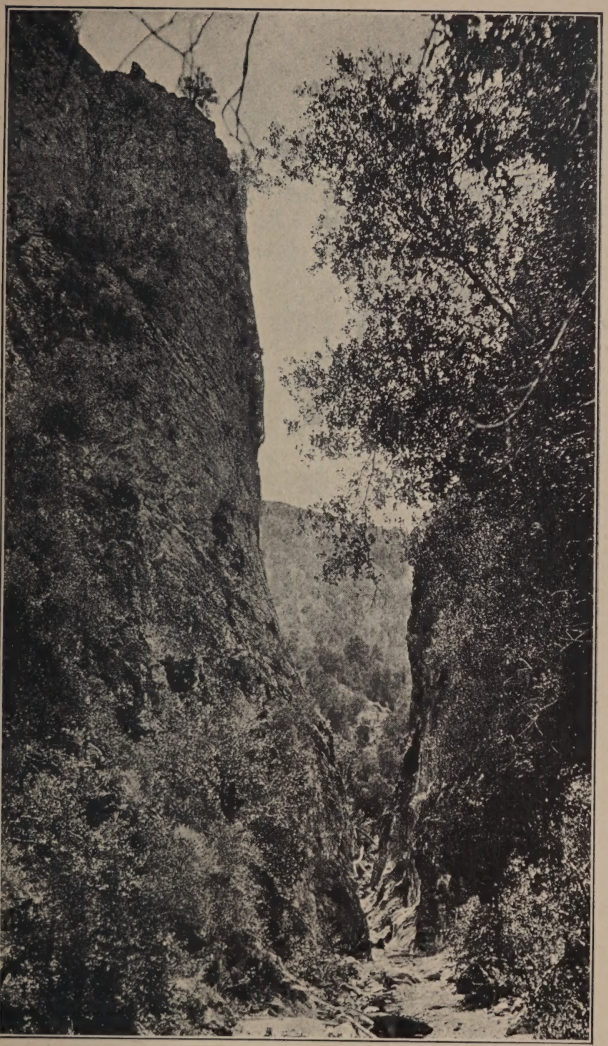
[1] One day in the Mexican quarter of Los Angeles I ran across a book purporting to be a veracious account of the life of the *bandido*. In it the spot where he was brought to bay is given as the Arroyo Cantua. This issues into the San Joaquin plain near Coalinga, about a hundred miles northwest of the Tejon; but miles are more lightly held in the spacious West than in the thickly settled East, and a hundred is no great matter.

living who remember seeing Joaquin's name cut in the bark of a sycamore near the San Fernando Pass (a favorite camping-ground in the old days for travelers between Los Angeles and the North), in impudent juxtaposition to the pious crosses deep carved by the missionary fathers on their rounds. There is a tradition, however, that, in spite of that head in the whiskey, Joaquin was not killed, after all, but escaped to South America and died in bed like a "four-square Christian" at the age of ninety. I have played cribbage on a board made from the gunstock of a Forty-Niner, who afterward drifted south and wrote from Chile that he had seen with his own eyes the redoubtable Joaquin walking the streets of Valparaiso.

As to Vasquez, his most noteworthy operations took place in the early 1870's. Like all of his class he arranged his public appearances when and where least expected, and each at a great distance from the last. A man of a morose disposition, distrustful even of his followers, he allowed none but his *teniente*, Clodomiro Chavez, to become his familiar, repeatedly changed the membership of his band, and, when camping with them, slept remote from the rest. What he robbed on the road he shared with the needy, and so built for himself a certain regard in the popular heart. One of his non-professional friends was that Greek George of whom mention has been made as sometime camel-driver at Fort Tejon. When the ungainly beasts were at last loosed to the devil and the desert, Greek George, his occupation gone, settled on some land in the Santa Monica

foothills where Hollywood now is. There one fine morning Don Tiburcio dropped in for a snack of breakfast and the latest news of the pueblo, as they called Los Angeles; and I believe, too, there was as usual a lady in the case, for Greek George, they say, had a daughter. And there, with his gun unhandily in a corner, the sheriff's posse trapped him fairly. The chagrined bandit proved a good loser. "Boys," he said, "you have done well, and I was a damned fool. It was my own fault." With that he shook hands with the sheriff and rode jauntily off with his captors to the calaboose, where for a while he was quite the hero, received admiring callers and some flowers. Perhaps it was this excess of sentiment for him in the southern capital that led to his transfer to San José; at any rate, it was at the latter place that he was sentenced and ignominiously hanged a year later.

That former retreat of Vasquez of which I started out to speak goes by the name of the "Devil's *Potrero*" on the Agua Blanca, a spot so remote from human haunt, yet so approachable from many sides by one acquainted with the land, and so impossible of blockade, that it admirably served the bandit's purpose as a refuge. It was about a dozen miles from the ranch of my man of the bees, and one morning I bade him good-bye and set out for it. The Agua Blanca is a charming, trouty little stream that joins the Piru a few miles above the mouth of the San Feliciano Cañon. For some miles I sauntered along it, enjoying its placid flow among corpulent boulders and over glistening granite pavements and sidling



DEVIL'S GATEWAY, SANTA BARBARA NATIONAL FOREST

shelves, now in sun and now in the shadow of tall alders, the margins broadly banded with white deposits of alkali, obviously the reason for the brook's Spanish name which means the White Water. By and by the sides of the cañon, never far apart, drew rapidly together and all but touched in a narrow gorge with high, perpendicular rock walls called the "Devil's Gateway." Through this cleft of the mountain the stream forces its way, a turbulent torrent in time of winter rain, but in the dry season a shallow stream up which the footman proceeds dry-shod, leaping from rock to rock. The Gateway passed, I was met by a little tumbling brook descending from the hill at the left. Here a dim trail set off, and, following it with difficulty, sinking once to my knees in a slough of black ooze and again buried to my eyes in a thicket of fern, nettles, and poison oak, I arrived at last at an old log cabin in a clump of live-oaks. Ahead in the sun lay the Devil's *Potrero* — a verdant, wild-flowery bowl rimmed around with mountains, where I could easily fancy one who was not on the mind of the law loafing away a lifetime, "the world forgetting and by the world forgot." A cool spring issued from under a shady bank near by, and a bit of arable land could be turned to account by a venturesome horticulturist. *Potrero* is one of those Spanish words that still stick in California nomenclature and help to preserve the foreign color of the land. Its original significance, of a fenced pasture given over to the breeding of horses or cattle, has been modified in California to apply to mountain meadows of wild pasture shut

in naturally in such a way as to prevent the straying of stock. Why this particular *potrero* should be accredited to the Devil is not apparent at this day; but the fact of such association may have made it the more to Vasquez's purpose, as tending to create an atmosphere of dread on the part of outsiders. At any rate, here he would come when the world was too much at his heels, sleep off his fatigue, and plot new deviltries, corralling his animals the while in this pretty *potrero*, where on the afternoon of my visit a heavenly peace seemed to reign, the quiet broken only by the chuckle of hidden quail and the murmur of a passing breeze.

The sun was now low on the western peaks, and I was tired. The sagging door of the old cabin had an inviting look. A cot or two, an iron stove, and a few sticks of furniture indicated occasional use, perhaps by hunters or cattlemen, and, as I had a couple of sandwiches in my pocket and a few crumbs of tea, why not, I thought, spend the night here, the shade of Vasquez willing, and set out on my further travels fresh in the morning? I had just started a fire in a fireplace of blackened stones by the cabin door, and was hunting a tin can to boil water in for my tea, when the tinkle of a bell caught my ear, and shortly three pack-burros appeared followed by two men on foot. They silently made camp a hundred yards or so away, setting to at once to build a fire and put on it a pot of beans to cook. They waved me a friendly salutation, and after their supper was dispatched I strolled over to their camp, where they sat before a big burning log, smoking their pipes in silence. One

was an elderly man, grizzled and stoop-shouldered; the other, apparently in his thirties and alert of manner. The younger man did the talking for both, and did it with an astonishing admixture of profanity — a fact of which he was probably as unconscious as of the dirt on his unwashed skin. A violin case stuck up from the camp equipage, and he asked me if I could play. My negative was an evident disappointment to him, for it seems one of his pleasures was to find some one who could, and thus relieve the tedium of camp. The pair had joined fortunes, he told me, a couple of weeks before, after losing their jobs in town, and taken to the woods for a vacation. They had been fishing over on the Sespe with poles cut from alders and six feet of line apiece, and now were loafing about the Agua Blanca country. After a while they would freshen up the grub stock — beans, coffee, onions, flapjack flour, dried apricots — and light out north for the Kern Cañon and on into the High Sierra.

"There," he went on, "we'll kill some deer, make jerky, and beat it down to some desert town for a job in the fall. Then, when winter comes and work in town is slack, me for the high country again and trap. There's bear, foxes, cats, mountain lions, and some smaller stuff to be had, and I'll make some sort of stake, you bet. Sometimes I wish I was rich, but, do you know, partner, I often wonder how much that is — to be rich. I once knew a bank president, and he must have been worth a hundred thousand dollars, and damned if the guy was n't out for more yet. Think of it! Take it from me, the

human race is worse than the animals. You can fill up an animal and it goes off and lays down, satisfied and happy. But a man — Lord, he's never satisfied; he wants this and he must have that, whatever he sees."

I waked next morning with the first rays of the sun in my eyes, and in my ears some imperfect strains of "Melinda Cinda." It was my young neighbor blithely singing as he cooked breakfast.

"The old man's out for the burros," he called, in response to my "Good-morning," "but, Lord, he ain't worth a damn tracking stock, he can't hear the bell. Got deef working two thousand feet down in a hot mine. Only thing good about that job is the wages — you work naked and have a man to pour water on you. Come over and have some of these hot apricots."

I filled my tin cup, and the man looked curiously at me as I dipped them up with a piece of bread.

"I've noticed something funny about you," he observed, as I thanked him and said good-bye; "you don't ever swear, do you?"

HIGHER PEAKS

Lift me, O Lord, above the level plain,
  Beyond the cities where life throbs and thrills,
And in the cool airs let my spirit gain
  The stable strength and courage of thy hills.

MEREDITH NICHOLSON

I

UP SAN ANTONIO BY THE DEVIL'S BACKBONE

BEST beloved of all the Sierra Madre peaks is San Antonio, whose ample crown, in shape somewhat like an inverted dish, is the dominating feature of the range. It is the one mountain whose elevation — 10,080 feet above the sea — is sufficient to support a snow-cap throughout the winter; and, from December to June in ordinary seasons, the white summit against the blue makes from the valley a sight of chaste loveliness, which becomes still lovelier when the setting sun entenders it to color of rose. Under the ardors of June the last of the snowy crown melts away save for an occasional patch that lingers a month or so longer in protected hollows, and there is revealed, rising above the dark green cloak of pine and chaparral, a rounded expanse of barren gravel and shale, now pink, now gray, which has gained for the mountain in popular speech the affectionate sobriquet of "Old Baldy." It looks an easy enough back to climb, and, if you have anything of the Californian in you, you mark it for the objective of an outing sometime. Should you be in a hurry, you may motor over capital roads by way of the orange groves of Pomona and Ontario to Camp Baldy — Dell's place of the old-timers — a pretty little public resort set in the forest at the junction of two brawling mountain brooks, the San Antonio and the Bear, five thousand feet under the summit and

the same above the sea; mount a horse for the eight-mile climb by trail to the top; enjoy the view and a mouthful of snow from some sunless cleft of the rocks; and be back at the camp for dinner and a run home under the stars. The Professor and I are old-fashioned, and decided upon doing the thing afoot with knapsacks, taking a week to it.

In the snow-fields of San Antonio several perennial waters have their birth, chief among which is the east or main fork of the San Gabriel, important enough to be classed as a river. We decided to attain the summit by following that stream up to its source on the north flank of the mountain; and we chose knapsacks rather than a burro, because of the pack being the lesser evil. By careful selection and the exercise of self-denial a temperate eater can keep the weight of a week's comestibles down to fifteen pounds or so,[1] and this, added to a blanket, a skillet, and a few table and toilet accessories, is not so unbearable as to interfere seriously with pleasure, while it makes a man as independent as a turtle with

[1] For instance, one package two-minute oat-food; one package seedless raisins; one can choclat-achor (a powdered instant chocolate made from the whole bean); two small cans salmon; one can powdered milk; two pounds dried apricots, peaches, or prunes; one pound English walnuts (hulled); one pound cheese; one package egg noodles, rice, or corn-meal; four small cans beans; a pound or two of hard crackers (a multi-grain sort called Grant's is excellent); a tin of tea; sugar; salt. If the German meal sausages of pre-war days come again, let some of them be included. This bill of fare may be regarded as Spartan or Sybaritic, according to the point of view. At any rate, it will keep you going; particularly if you start the day on oat-food well mixed with raisins and a dash of milk added — a most nutritious and palatable ration. Of course, if you are clever enough to catch trout as you travel, your pack may be correspondingly reduced and your fare enlivened.

his house upon his back. The burro is a nice animal to read about in your armchair at home, but he is a beast for experts — admirable if you know how to handle him and your temper, but the spring of woes unnumbered if you are green at the business — a creature of unsuspected whims and contrarieties. If you stop to enjoy a view or take a photograph, he likes to walk briskly ahead and, leaving the trail, will artfully entangle his load in the brush, even to the necessity of repacking; if you are in a mood to make time, he loiters exasperatingly, crops every trail-side blade of grass, and must be prodded and belabored till your arm aches. He will refuse to drink at a torrent and manifest a prodigious thirst a mile farther on when there is no prospect of water for a day's journey. Stops for camp must be arranged with view to his provender, concerning which his views may be totally different from yours, and your sleep will be disturbed by thoughts of his getting loose in the night and leaving you stranded. If you have a tender heart, he is forever breaking it with deceitful sighs and groans, one eye the while upon you, as he toils painfully up steeps that, if you were not looking, he would take as nimbly as a goat. He develops real troubles, too; as lacerated knees, or, worst of all, saddle sores. Then the pack — a dozen times a day it slips over the burro's head or under his belly, and must be taken off and laboriously reset. Of all these contingencies the Professor and I thought, and, slinging our knapsacks very contentedly over our shoulders, set blithely forth one foggy morning of early July, encouraged by the

cheery remark of a sympathetic young man in the grocery store where we had made a purchase: "I like the fellows that don't mind taking a little hardship for a good time. Driving up to it in your glad rags in a limousine — shucks, there ain't nothin' to that."

We left the valley at Glendora, a tree-embowered foothill town near the mouth of Big Dalton Cañon. Into this *cañada* we turned, following a trail which leads across the outer range of the Sierra Madre into the cañon of the San Gabriel's East Fork, through a region which, the autumn before, had been swept by a particularly disastrous fire. An area of about fifty square miles in the east San Gabriel Basin had been denuded by the flames, which leaped enclosing ranges and surcharged the air with heat for miles around. Ashes dropped in towns as far distant as Los Angeles, and day after day the sun shone a sullen red ball through a veil of smoke, until rain put an end to what an army of fire-fighters had been powerless to check. And now, less than a year later, it was interesting to see the result of Nature's *vis medicatrix* on the desolated hillsides. Stripped of their coat of chaparral, drenched by winter rains, and warmed by the unveiled suns of spring, they had borne such a crop of wild bloom as few could remember the equal of. The high tide of it had subsided by July, but enough remained to make our jaunt a feast of flowers. Lupines and phacelias in blue, gilias in pink and white, mentzelias and dicentra in yellow, goldenrod, scarlet larkspur, white convolvulus, purple brodiæa, mariposa tulips of divers

hues — all were knit together into one multicolored garment, tenderly covering all scars and making flush times for bees and hummingbirds. It is at such a time one may hope for a sight of the real California poppy — *Papaver Californicum* — a frail flower with crumpled petals of palest red, soon falling, which is rarely seen except after some desolating fire.[1] The chaparral shrubs — adenostoma, manzanita, rhus, heteromeles, prunus — their dead branches charred and bare to the tip, had sent up from the living roots lusty shoots of new growth two and three feet high, clean, shining, and alert after their bath of fire, the soil of contact with a besmirching world not yet upon them. A cheery sight they made, bodying forth the blessed, unquenchable spirit of renewal and hope that is in nature — *Natura*, "the forever being born" — which after every calamity sets to undauntedly to build up the waste places, to replace dead ashes with the living beauty that was in the beginning. A charming touch in this reconstruction programme was given by the morning-glory vines, which trailed over the ground and twined themselves about the blackened trunks and branches of the burned shrubs, clothing their nakedness with verdure and climbing to the very top and beyond, to fall back in graceful festoons and showers of bright bloom that starred the slopes by the acre. Even more striking was the effect of the widespread colonies of the magnificent scarlet larkspur, as tall

[1] The beautiful flower commonly called California poppy, while it belongs to the same family with the poppy, is not truly a poppy, but an eschscholtzia.

as a man, their ample thyrses of brilliant flowers dyeing the distance with warm color in solid sheets. It was a silent, solitary way, yielding us no sign of human life but one: as we lay under an alder tree, listening dozily to the tinkle of a cheerful burnie that sparkled in the cañon's bottom, the music of the waters merged imperceptibly into the hum of a motor, and looking up we saw in darkling flight against the pale sky of noon an aeroplane — one of the Forest Service scouts that patrol the mountains, spying into their secret places for first news of fire. Will it, we wondered, be a more circumspect world, now that the sky has eyes?

It must have been very hot on those flowery hills, for, when we had crossed them and descended into a shady nook where Camp Bonita is snugly set at the junction of the San Gabriel and Cattle Creek Cañons, we were refreshed with a noticeable feeling of coolness, though the thermometer on the shady side of a tree marked 94° and was moving steadily upward. A pleasant memory is Camp Bonita, with its clustered cabins and tent-houses in the shade of great trees, two tumbling trout streams, embroidered with bubbles and flecks of foam, brawling by. Moreover, there was a good cook in the kitchen, and the crowning feature of the meal she set before us was a chocolate pie of opulent proportions and ample filling. We shared it with a young man who followed the maker with adoring eyes as she came and went. "That lady," he confided to us — "that lady can't only cook. She can drive a team, pack a burro, catch fish, make garden, and is a real mother

to the mountain men. She's all woman, believe me."

The man that day in charge of the camp was one of those well-intentioned marplots who tempt the traveler the world over, by insisting on changing his plans for him. Upon outlining our modest itinerary to him, though it was none of his affair he must turn it topsy-turvy. "What you want to do is this," he dogmatized, throwing one leg comfortably over the arm of his chair and blowing a cloud of tobacco smoke heavenward. Then he launched out into a programme that included fresh vegetables at one place, and at another trout so greedy and silly that we could catch them with a pin hook; a marvelous waterfall somewhere else, and so on until the rains of autumn should begin. We listened, paid our reckoning, and proceeded with our original plan.

Above Camp Bonita the cañon of the East Fork narrows to a wild gorge, where the river, crowded first against one vertical cliff and then against that across the way, hurries tortuously and noisily, now spouting upward in sparkling fountains as it dashes against some boulder bigger than the rest, now slipping in sleek falls or pouring in ouzel-haunted cascades over granite ledges. Scant room is left for the foot passenger, who is continually crowded from the gravelly, stone-cluttered margin into the water. Indeed, he can only foot it at all during the dry season, for in time of rains the river becomes an irresistible torrent of roaring, passionate water filling the chasm from side to side, except where this

yawns out, as it occasionally does, into a wide flat. Such trail as exists is alternately on one bank and the other, and many times in a mile you must either ford or cross on a foot-log. This latter is ticklish business, and nothing is easier than to miss your footing and plunge into the current swiftly swirling beneath you.

Travel in the Upper San Gabriel is never heavy — principally anglers who are indifferent to wet legs and a few miners who are the region's permanent population. Now and then we would come upon one of the latter's cabins usually set beside a tree in one of those sunny flats into which the cañon occasionally widens. The occupant of one sat in his door — a small, bushy-browed man of perhaps seventy, and we stopped to pass the time of day with him, hoping to learn somewhat of life as it looks through miners' eyes. His interest centered in placer gold, but temperately — for in winter high water made work impossible and in summer many days were too hot. It brought twenty dollars an ounce if he sent it to the mint, but the dealers in Los Angeles paid only seventeen and skimped the weight, thieves that they were. How did he keep in touch with the world? Well, any of the boys coming up the river in summer would bring his mail or a newspaper, and in winter he did n't touch. Yes, he liked to read if it was true, like newspapers, but no story-books for him, they were just a pack of lies. Lonesome? Bless you, no; too much company sometimes, claim-jumpers — a dirty lot, believe him, they take a chance of getting their heads blown off. He had

PLACER MINER'S CABIN, SAN GABRIEL CAÑON, IN THE SIERRA MADRE

had to run one off the claim not long before at the point of a gun. He had some regular visitors, though — a pair of wrens. They came in at his window at supper-time and picked crumbs from his table, kind o' cute like. Once he had had a cat, which he had patiently taught to respect the wrens' rights; but something had got her eventually, a coyote, perhaps, or a cougar. His only visitor on four legs now was a squirrel, which he had taught to hunt for baynuts in his pocket. From a shady spring gushing from beneath a huge rock, he dipped a pail of cool, sweet water and set it before us — the finest in California, he averred, which was no idle brag, he would have us know, for he had lived in every county of the State except Alpine. As we sat about the bucket, three tippling teetotalers dipping and drinking and dipping again, the leaves of sheltering live-oaks whispering overhead and the river purring by us, I fancy we must have made an Arcadian scene; and the old man fell to gossiping of old times in the cañon.

"Mebbe you don't know it, but once there were mighty good placers in these mountains," he said; "not so much about here as lower down below Bonita; only there was n't any Bonita in them days — that's come in since. When they struck gold in the Kern River country in the 1850's, the crowd in the north started down there, and when Kern pinched out, as it did pretty *pronto*, some of 'em just naturally drifted on down here, and there was real live times in the San Gabriel diggings for several years. Did you ever hear of Eldoradoville? No, of course not; you'd have to be an old-timer to have

heard of that. I had the story of it from some of the old boys, and it was a burg all right — a regular little old up-to-date mining town on the San Gabriel just below the Forks, not fifteen miles from here. What do you think of that — a town in the heart of these mountains and now not a chimney left? There was three stores, a bunch of saloons, a stage-line from Los Angeles, political meetings, poker, dances, and everything. Well, sir, everything was lovely for a time, and then in December, I think it was, 1859, there came a tremendous rain, and it poured like the sky roof had caved in. The water in the Forks rose and rose and kept on rising, and all records of high water were broken. In a night, as the old-timers used to say, Eldoradoville changed from a mountain town to a seaport, with a clear channel to the Pacific Ocean. Well, sir, she was n't built for that, and, by George, out she went to sea — the whole shebang — houses, saloons, Long Toms, sluices, wingdams, cofferdams, and, you bet, a lot of damns with an *n* in them from those cleaned-out miners; and, say, it never stopped till it brought up in San Pedro Harbor, forty miles away. It sure was discouragin'. Some of the boys kept on panning gold there for several years after that, but I guess the civic spirit all went out in the flood, for I never heard of Eldoradoville starting up again." [1]

"You've entertained us very agreeably," remarked the Professor, as we took our leave, "and

[1] The curious will be interested in an article on the gold mines of the Sierra Madre, by the late J. M. Guinn (for many years secretary of the Southern California Historical Society), in the *Land of Sunshine* magazine of Los Angeles, vol. v, p. 62.

I'd like to give you this" — slipping a small book into the miner's grimy hand. "You like reading that is truthful, and I'll guarantee this tells no lie."

My curiosity was excited by the little transaction, and when we were out of earshot I asked what the book was.

"The Gospel according to Saint John," he replied.

Now and then one of these solitaries of the cañon varies the monotony of his hermit life by maintaining a little vegetable garden, watering it by a diversion ditch from some brook that is a tributary of the river. One such we found at the junction of the Iron Fork with the main stream, Iron Mountain looking shaggily down upon the neat rows of beans, tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, parsnips, strawberries, and what not, bordered by fig trees and peach, and several cozy tiers of white beehives. It was an unexpected touch of hominess in the wilderness, the accomplishment of one "Hickory," otherwise "Whiskers," a tall, unkempt man and taciturn, clad in dangling overalls and an abounding beard, whom we found loitering in the dappled sunshine of his truck-patch and directing some irrigation with the tip of a hoe — an occupation, by the way, that might class with angling as the contemplative man's recreation. The fires of the previous autumn had reached almost to his holdings, but, in spite of that threat to his property, his view on fire was radically at variance with those of the Forest Service. "They're a good thing," he said, "clearing out the brush and freshening up the feed, and that's worth

while, I'll have you know, when you have a string of hungry burros on your hands." For a trifle he dug us some potatoes and carrots to enliven our dinner; and with a certain old-fashioned courtesy bore us company to the edge of his property, where he set us on our proper trail with a "So-long, boys, good luck, and be good."

On the maps this junction of the Iron Fork of the San Gabriel with the larger stream is marked Trogden's, for here, until death recently took him off, one Trogden of convivial memory kept an anglers' headquarters, mined a bit, and laid the foundations of that garden which we found luxuriating under "Hickory's" care. It was from old Trogden that I learned the true method of eating a trout, which is this: Hold the head of the fish between the thumb and forefinger of one hand and the tail between the forefinger and thumb of the other, and bite liberally into the body of the fish as you would into an ear of corn; then, the last sweet morsel consumed, toss away the naked bone as you would the corncob, and reach out for another fish. Could any way be neater or more thorough?

In all the Sierra Madre there is no wilder spot, I think, than this region about Trogden's. To the west an overland trail leads deviously across the mountains through chaparral and belts of woodland to Bichota Cañon, and that way down into the cañon of the North Fork, a way of magnificent vistas; southward a mile, and you look dizzily down into the deep, naked chasm of the San Gabriel Narrows, where the river, reduced by distance to a thread,

squeezes and fights its way between crowding granite walls out of shadow into sunlight; eastward, and a mile above the mouth of the Iron Fork, the river is joined by Fish Fork, where, they tell you, the veriest novice may catch a supper of trout with no better outfit than an alder pole and a bait of helgamite picked from under a damp stone. A narrow, steepish cañon is that of Fish Fork, down which the stream leaps by a succession of waterfalls born in springs high up on Old Baldy's shoulders. An old trail used to go that way to the peak, and that remains a fine adventure for the hardy and experienced, but it is no job for amateurs. For them the better plan is to fare northward up the river as the Professor and I went, our amphibian traveling now over and our feet set in a trail of sun-warmed grit, which soon brought a comforting dryness to our water-soaked shoes. And by and by we came to an elbow of the stream where quite suddenly its north-and-south course turned easterly, and we were in the lovely, unspoiled forest of the Prairie Fork, with North Baldy — Old Baldy's lesser brother — looking down upon us. This peak is a scant seven hundred feet lower than Old Baldy, from which it is distant about nine miles in an airline, and is marked by a similar bald, rounded crown cracked and scarred in summer with dry gulches which in winter are streaks of snow. It is the dominating feature of the cañon of the Prairie Fork, stationed at its western end like a materialized god Terminus.

Prairie Fork gets its name, we may take it, from the numerous small natural glades that grace its

borders — sunny openings in the prevailing forest of pine, big-cone spruce, and oak, carpeted with wild flowers and grasses, with blue gilias, white evening primroses, thistle poppies crêpy-petaled enclosing hearts of gold, and thickets of wild rose, yerba santa, and clambering clematis. Everywhere, even in the shade of trees, Whipple's yucca lifted magnificent spires of creamy bloom against the darkling background of the woods. We were now at an elevation of about six thousand feet. The valley country which we had left a few days before had been brown and out of flower, but up here the year, though more than half spent by the calendar, still had spring in its keeping, and mariposa tulips bloomed side by side with goldenrod. Through grove after grove we passed of stately yellow pines, mingled with cañon live-oaks and Kellogg oaks, our feet treading noiselessly a springy carpet of brown leaves and disintegrated litter, generations deep. The narrow valley, walled by mountains rising sharply, presented that aspect so characteristic of the southern sierras, the northward-facing slope garmented in the rich green of coniferous trees (in this case an untouched forest of big-cone spruce), and the south slope pallider with chaparral and xerophytic growths. A fine, peaceful solitude, enveloping us in a sense of remoteness from the world of industry; yet, as we knew, the encompassing heights looked down on miles of laden orchards and fruitful fields, fed by our little river and its affluents. This, as we ascended, grew narrower and narrower, until we could leap it dry-shod, and fin-

ally we parted company with it under Pine Mountain — a northern spur of Old Baldy known to the older mountaineers as "Little Baldy" — whence it came foaming like a millrace down a narrow alley of tall alders that locked arms above it.

Somewhat short of that, it must have been, that we came upon an unlooked-for sign of humanity — a roof or two appearing out of the brush ahead of us. Soon we stepped into a clearing where scattered about were the decaying buildings of an ancient gold mine — the Native Son — long since abandoned. Evidently it had once been a scene of much activity, but now its sagging timbers were rotting, its stamps were gnawed by rust, and its boilers become the lounging-place of dozy lizards. Here we found the tracks of a wagon road coming in from the east, connecting this wilderness where wealth was dug up with the cities of the plain where it was spent. It had been many a day since wheels had passed over the road, and Nature had trespassed upon it after her own fashion, until it was now a mere trail all but lost in a riotous growth of wild flowers and scrub. Pushing our way through this, we were greeted by a surprising sight — an assemblage of small trees whose foliage suggested fig leaves, but smaller, and covered with large yellow flowers so that each little tree seemed enveloped in cloth of gold. These were Fremontias, a tree named by Dr. John Torrey for Frémont, the picturesque character who discovered it growing on the Sierra Nevada foothills in 1842. To the good Doctor, going over the dried spoil of the expedition in the quiet of his herbarium, it was a

notable find, interesting, not only because it was the first representative of a new genus, but because of its obvious kinship to the famous and remarkable hand-tree of Mexico.

The subject of plant names was an interesting one to the Professor. As we jogged along our talk often turned upon it, and we were agreed in pronouncing it a humanizing sort of practice for scientists to attach personal names to their findings as in this case of the Fremontia. If, as some one has maintained, a garden is the purest of pleasures, to have one's name linked to a plant in Nature's wild garden is to be inducted into a choice hierarchy — and to be insured a fame of rare sweetness and of rare endurance, too. Who can say but that all that our thirtieth-century descendants will know of the great founder of modern botany, Papa Linnæus, will be that fragment of his identity which persists in the name of the twin-flowered Linnæa? — that dainty darling of his which, please God, children and men and women of childlike heart will still be loving and plucking in summer woods the whole world round. Certainly our knowledge now is as scanty of one Gentius who, they say, was sometime King of Illyria; but with each returning autumn his name is revived upon our tongues and will be, it is safe to say, till gentians shall be no more upon the earth.

So here is a special pleasure of the trail, I think, this reviving of biography in living plants of the wayside. It appeals to me as a sort of Old Mortality rôle, more cheerful than cleaning moss from ancient mortuary records cut in stone. Among the trees of

this Prairie Fork there was another that held for the Professor a pleasant association — the Kellogg oak, which keeps alive the memory of a kindly old Forty-Niner, Dr. Albert Kellogg. It is the black oak of the woodsmen, *Quercus Kelloggii* of some botanists, or *Quercus Californica* of others — a sturdy tree of graceful habit, often fifty or sixty feet high with a trunk diameter of a yard or so, the bark noticeably dark, even black, and, on the older parts of the trunk, deeply cut into small checkers. It is of such distinct character that among all the trees of the Pacific coast forests none, perhaps, is more easily identified by the novice. The deep-lobed leaves, each tipped with one or more bristles, are deciduous, and one of the spring glories of those woodlands of which the Kellogg oak is a considerable part is the opening of its leaf-buds. Then the crowns of these trees take on an appearance that is little short of other-worldly — enhaloed in delicate tones of pink and yellow as tender as the dawn. Dr. Jepson, in his "Flora of California," says that next to the cañon live-oak, the Kellogg oak is the most widely distributed of all oaks in the State. In the south it affects only the higher ranges, usually consorting with yellow pines, as here on the Prairie Fork, where we noticed it first at about six thousand feet above the sea. John Muir somewhere speaks of the nut-pine groves as the "bountiful orchards" of the red-man, but the expression applies equally well to the groves of this oak, whose acorns have from time immemorial been a highly prized food source by many tribes of California Indians.

To return to the man whom it commemorates. Back in the 1850's he was one of seven who met one evening in a shabby room in San Francisco "to found, by the dim light of candles, which they had brought in their pockets, the California Academy of Sciences." [1] While the world about him was feverishly scrambling for gold, he worked steadfastly and with joyousness till the end of his days, thirty-four years later, upon the task of bringing to light the botanical riches of the State. In those pioneer times a California plant student was virtually marooned, without books or herbarium to guide him in the identification of the novel flowers he was continually encountering. Under such circumstances Kellogg naturally got into the way of naming his discoveries himself, and published at various times some two hundred and fifteen species, which time has shown to be at least one hundred and fifty more than were valid. He was a man of childlike and imaginative nature, never happier than when tramping the hills in quest of plants, or, when seated later at home in shirt-sleeves and red-backed waistcoat, a corncob pipe in his mouth, he made painstaking drawings of his finds. His papers on botanical subjects, published in Hutchings' "California Magazine" and other local periodicals of the day, possess a certain quaint charm of style, and are marked by many a side excursion into philosophy, altogether disapproved of by the more disciplined scientists. His portrait, which I ran across the other day in a San Francisco biological journal of some thirty years ago,

[1] *Zoe*, April, 1893.

shows the deep-set, luminous eyes of a mystic, and one is not surprised that even in his scientific descriptions he was fond of noting what he believed to be correspondences between the material world and the spiritual. He was, indeed, a devotee of Swedenborg, and delighted in the study of the Scriptures and their interpretation by that seer. Born in Connecticut in 1813, he was obliged by a weakness of his lungs while still a young man to seek the milder climate of the South, where he practiced medicine for several years; but, as he never was known to present a bill for his services, he grew poorer and poorer until he had to look about for other means of livelihood. A chance meeting with Audubon, who engaged him as companion on a scientific trip, proved a turning-point in his life and shaped his future. In 1849 an invitation from some gold-seekers to go with them to California gave him the chance he needed to reach the Pacific coast, which was accomplished in a schooner by way of Cape Horn.

The cañon of the Prairie Fork heads in a sort of rincon at the foot of a steep ridge cut by five gulches spreading like fingers of a hand. Along one of these the trail leads upward past a spring that gushes from beneath a clump of willows and goes bickering between spongy banks flowery with lupine, helenium, paintbrush, columbine, meadow rue, and scarlet mimulus. It was in such a situation, though not in these mountains, but in the San Bernardinos, that Dr. C. C. Parry, in 1876, discovered the lily that bears his name — a graceful beauty with

drooping bells of pale yellow sparingly flecked with purple and shedding an exquisite fragrance.[1] We found it later by another spring on the approach to Old Baldy. Do you ever stop to consider this miracle of fragrance? Unseen itself, prodigally issuing out of the unseen, and continually as prodigally replenished, it is like the oil of the widow of Sarepta's inexhaustible cruse, and no less a miracle because daily occurring under our noses. What more can be said of it than that it is out of the one divine storehouse of those unseen things that are eternal?

From the head of Prairie Fork there is a choice of routes to the summit of Mount San Antonio. One is up the northern slope of that Pine Mountain, already mentioned, a spur of the main peak, and connected with the latter by a ridge, rough, but traversable. In the absence of a dependable trail, one must make one's way as it develops — an interesting

[1] Parry found it in a damp spot at the head of Edgar Cañon, where the lilies were fighting a losing battle with the potatoes of a rancher who was farming the land. This Dr. Parry, by the way, has his name attached to many a Western plant. He was an Englishman, who three quarters of a century ago was a young physician practicing in Davenport, Iowa, but whose heart was in the wild flowers. Somehow in 1849 he got appointed botanist of the Mexican Boundary Survey, and this brought him to the Pacific coast. From that time until his death, some forty years later, he devoted himself wholeheartedly to the study of the flora of western North America. It was business enough for a lifetime, for with him (as he once said of one of his associates) "the truths of nature are serious matters." Perhaps no personal name occurs more frequently than Parry's in the plant nomenclature of Southern California, a region which he visited many times. One of the most genial and lovable of naturalists, he united with sound botanical knowledge and method an endearing personality that had its spring, I think, in Christian grace. Now that his gathering hand is long since gathered (to paraphrase one of his own expressions), it is good to find his memory persisting in many a floral darling of his earthly day.

business for the hardy climber. For the less venturesome a better plan is to follow the old wagon trail over the ridge into the north fork of Lytle Creek, and descending this you come by and by to Coldwater Cañon. Turning into this, the Professor and I found a capital trail, by which we climbed to everlovelier outlooks and groves of nobler trees until we stood upon the crest of a divide that looked down into San Antonio Cañon. The sun was just setting, and, looking upward across the bristling tops of a tamarack forest that loosely clothed the slope, we could see the bare crown of the mountain of our quest, mellow and benignant in the evening light and gathering mists. It was our first sight of it since leaving the valley and after walking almost entirely around it for a week treading on its toes and sleeping on its flanks. A woman sat beside the trail that led down the mountain, and occasionally gave vent to a shrill halloo, which was answered faintly from the upper wood. In a little while two boys came bounding from above — one with an amazing, blood-stained face from a case of nose-bleed. They were a highly excited little couple over the successful outcome of their climb to the peak, and after inquiring of us the time of day they set off briskly down the cañon with the woman, who was evidently their mother. It was a pleasant music in that solitude of the high mountain — their cheerful, boyish clack, growing fainter and fainter until the cañon depths swallowed both them and their talk.

Old Baldy's summit even in midsummer is a bleak place to pass the night, and we decided to

postpone further progress toward the peak till the morrow. Looking about us for a camping-ground sheltered enough to escape the winds, which at all seasons draw searchingly across these upper reaches of the mountain, we sighted through a vista of the trees a log cabin snugly set against a shaly bank in the shadow of lofty pines. There was no evidence of life about, but an unlatched door we accepted as an invitation to make ourselves at home. There were two rooms, in one of which were two rough beds and a cookstove, and in the other a home-made table and stools. A clutter of pack-saddles and miner's tools filled the corners. On the table and fastened down with a nail driven through it was a sheet of paper on which was a penciled note addressed to the cabin owner, expressing regret at the latter's absence from home. The signer was evidently not an intimate friend, for he explained his identity by a parenthetical "I'm the man whose wife lost her hatpin." On the stove lay another note from a chance caller signed by the "man who rode out of the mountains with you." Obviously it was quite the thing to look in on this lone habitant of the heights, even if you did not know him very well; so we ventured to take advantage of the mute welcome of the open door and turned in for the night, glad to escape the discomfort of a bivouac on the ground at that chill altitude. In the morning the Professor composed on a leaf of his notebook a suitable acknowledgment of indebtedness to our absentee host and, departing, we left it, too, nailed to the table.

The morning star was just fading when we stepped

out of the door and doused our heads in icy water brought up from a tiny spring caught in a dimple of a near-by cañon-side. By the time we had breakfasted and were footing it up the summitward slope, the sun had risen, and the shadows of the tree-trunks barred the floor of the thin, open forest through which our trail went winding. Almost immediately we began to get glimpses of the desert; little by little these widened until, at the foot of the Devil's Backbone, the view became an almost unobstructed panorama. North and east lay the Mojave Desert, its native harshness transmuted into tender beauty by that distance which lends enchantment, shimmering in the sunlight from the Sierra Nevada to Arizona. We thought we could localize both Mount Whitney's top, one hundred and fifty miles to the north, that highest land in the United States outside of Alaska, and Death Valley, the lowest, eighty-eight miles to the right of it — an interesting instance of one extreme at the heels of another. As to San Gorgonio and San Jacinto, nearer at hand, there was no doubt — plum-purple islands at rest on lakes of white vapor, their crests silhouetted against the morning light. All the coast country to the south was a monster fogbank, upon whose undulations the sun shone as upon a polar sea, with here and there some mountain peak, higher than the rest, thrust up to the light.

Though the Professor and I had treated the subject of the passage of the Devil's Backbone with outward nonchalance when we spoke of it in advance, the fact is we were both secretly very uneasy

at the prospect of that dizzy business. The forest ranger from whom we had got our fire permit had remarked, "Oh, yes, you can do it all right, but mind your eye or you'll get a bad fall." Non-professionals, commenting on our programme, had not minced matters; for instance, "Gosh, boys, it's just like a knife's edge; drops off both sides plumb straight to nowhere and nothing to catch onto if *you* drop. To be sure, the worst of it is n't more than a couple of hundred feet or such a matter, but there's a quarter of a mile, all told, bad enough. Last time I was over it, the man with me got down on all fours and crept, and then his nose began to bleed and I just naturally had to carry him. It's the devil's own, all right."

So with these alarming recollections cropping up, we made an excuse of those comfortable, stable views of the lower country to dilly-dally long and fondly over them. At last, tightening our packs, we stepped gingerly out upon the dreaded ridge — to find that, after all, it was no worse than several ticklish bits we had negotiated elsewhere. The shaly crest along which the trail crept like a scratch was narrow enough in all conscience — indeed, hardly more than the width of our two feet — but it fell away less dizzily than we had been given to expect and we must have stumbled egregiously to have gone off. In fact, once we were relieved of our apprehensions, we found exhilaration in this sort of airy travel. It was like walking some bridge of the gods, so uplifted above the earth was it, so sweet and buoyant the air that drew across it, so remote

seemed the world and the things that are of the world. And it was a bridge that led us into quite a new land, treeless save for an occasional flattened tamarack or lowly clump of chinquapin, and rising easily by barren, gravelly undulations flecked with lingering snow-banks here and there, until we came out upon a wide, wind-swept expanse of shale and broken rock — a desert on a mountain peak. This was the summit. In chinks of the gravel a scattering of brave little stunted flowers held life by the skirts — eriogonum, alumroot, draba, a dwarfish currant or two, and one small blue violet — a rather noteworthy find, this last, as violets in California are more often yellow than blue. Here we found a cairn with a post implanted in it; and affixed to the post a metal plate, recording the elevation, confessed itself the work of the San Antonio Club, whose business, we took it, was to set its feet periodically on this highest land west of the San Bernardino Range — a worthy enough business, too, that of inducting lowlanders into purer airs and wider views.

A trail to Camp Baldy leads down the south side of the mountain. It was noon when we started down it. At four o'clock we were doing twenty miles an hour in an auto-stage out of the San Antonio Cañon, bound for Ontario and the train home.

II

SAN GORGONIO — THE TOP OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

I HAVE often wondered how the peaks of the south acquired the Spanish names that still distinguish them. Nothing that I have happened upon, in my desultory browsings through the records of the Hispanic period in California, throws light on the question. The diarists of the early Spanish expeditions within sight of the mountains did not honor one peak over another, but were content to lump under the general term La Sierra Madre de California [1] the whole noble range that fences in the southern coast country from the desert, and lies like a huge letter L in *alto relievo* northward from the Mexican border to the San Gorgonio Pass and thence westward indefinitely. I strongly suspect that those ancients, as well as the *Californios* of the Mexican régime, had small taste for mountaineering, and dubbed their peaks comfortably from the armchairs of home and at long range, economically transferring to them the names of the *ranchos* upon which the summits looked down and poured their blessed gift of water.

So, I take it, San Gorgonio the peak got its name from the Rancho San Gorgonio, a long-forgotten

[1] That is, the Mother Mountains of California. See, for instance, the diary of Padre Font, accompanying Anza's expedition, 1775–76. The name Sierra Madre is now limited to the San Gabriel Range, north of Los Angeles.

SUMMIT OF MOUNT SAN GORGONIO, THE TOP OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Spanish grant at the mountain's base, whose thousands of acres of wild pasturage were eventually cut up into a multitude of Gringo holdings fertile now in almonds, apricots, peaches, and the like. Irreverent Americans, finding the Spanish a clumsy mouthful, prefer to call the peak "Old Grayback," with what appropriateness you may judge for yourself when you view from afar the bare, gravelly summit stretched lengthily along above the timber-line. To be fair, though, it is not so much irreverence, I believe, as a certain fondness that prompts such nicknames, abhorred by austere purists. Your Californian is a born mountain-lover, and plays with the names of his favorite peaks as with the name of his sweetheart; and so we have Baldy, Saddleback, Grayback, Saint Jack, and so on, supplanting in popular speech the statelier appellations of Spain.

Of all the southern peaks San Gorgonio is the highest — 11,485 feet above the sea, or about ten thousand above its roots in the San Bernardino Valley. Together with its twin peak, San Bernardino, a stately cone five miles distant and only a few hundred feet lower, it forms the eastern culmination of the San Bernardino Range, which then drops sharply to the San Gorgonio Pass. Across this pass to the south, and twenty miles in an airline from San Gorgonio, the wind-beaten summit of San Jacinto rises to 10,805 feet. These two magnificent peaks stand as colossal posts to the Pass, which forms the gateway to the desert. Throughout the year they draw all men's eyes to them, but particularly in winter and spring, when their crowns, buried under

fields of snow, float dreamily like islands of the air, divorced from earth by mists that wreathe the lower declivities. According to the traditions of the Luiseño Indians, whose ancestral homes were within sight of these mountains, the two peaks were brothers and among the firstborn of the Earth Mother, from whom in the beginning all created things sprang — San Gorgonio being the elder and San Jacinto the younger.[1]

It is a natural curiosity to want to know what the topmost bit of Southern California is like, what grows there, and what prospects spread around. A number of public resorts, approachable by automobile, are sprinkled about the base and flanks of the mountain, and from them foot trails lead upward the rest of the way. There is, for instance, Forest Home in Mill Creek Cañon, at the foot of Mount San Bernardino. For one contemplating the climb this is, I think, the best place to outfit — if so imposing a term may be used in connection with so modest an adventure. The round trip to San Bernardino Peak or to San Gorgonio — one or the other, but not both, though a rough ridge connects the two — is possible within the limits of a summer day; the former, a comparatively easy matter for a robust walker, but the latter, being a round of twenty-six miles, would be better spread over two days. It is a comfortable climb, however, as mountain climbs go, devoid of the thrills that cliff-edge

[1] *Religion of the Luiseño Indians*, by Constance Goddard DuBois. It is interesting to note that the Luiseño name of San Gorgonio, *Pewipwe*, signifies "white on top," or "gray head," not unlike our American "Grayback."

trails awake, and all the way hedged about with sylvan loveliness. For four miles an old road follows the course of Mill Creek, a fine mountain torrent that brawls down a wide, bouldery bottom through a charming woodland of Coulter and yellow pines, incense cedar, white fir, Kellogg oak, and maple — a woodland vocal with the chatter of crested jays, woodpeckers, and squirrels, whose noisy industrial activities I find quite as endearing as the more æsthetic melodies of the songbirds. Now and then the forest, always airy and sunny, opens to a still sunnier glade, gay in the ageing year with goldenrod and the aster-like stars of corethrogyne. Sometimes such glades are gray lakes of the curious cordylanthus — a slender, thread-leaved, much-branched, sociable plant a couple of feet high, the yellowish blossoms, purple-streaked, generally bunched at the tips of the branchlets, and each resembling a tiny bellows. If you press the sides of the flower together between your finger and thumb, the slender beak opens like the bill of a hungry bird; and it is the most natural thing in the world to call the flower "bird-beak," the sensible popular name by which it goes.

Something over two miles above Forest Home, the road dips down and crosses a small stream threading its way through tumbled boulders and rubble out of a break in the mountain-side called "Snow Cañon." This gulch leads to a spot of more than ordinary interest to the student of plants. A mile in from the mouth it forks, and in the right-hand fork — a short, narrow gorge with precipitous

sides, one of which is in continual shadow — you will find, in most seasons as late as July or August, a miniature glacier of hardened snow filling the bed, and occasionally carrying over to a second year. My first visit there was on a morning of early September, when I found the cañon bridged by an arch of frozen snow mingled with shaly débris. Every night throughout the summer the temperature in that pocket of the hills must have descended to freezing. Edging up to the grateful coolness, a number of plants are at home which ordinarily are found at much higher altitudes or in more northern latitudes. These children of the cold, gathering about their frigid snow-bank as chicks about a mother hen or you and I about a pleasant fire, form what botanists have called a Hudsonian island — that is, an assemblage of vegetation of a sort that one would naturally expect under climatic conditions similar to those of Hudson Bay — a far cry, indeed, from Southern California. One of the most interesting of such cold-loving denizens of the place is the limber pine, a species of very high mountains, of which we shall chat a bit as we rest at the top of San Gorgonio, if you accompany me so far. Even more interesting to me was a fern of unfamiliar aspect which I found looking perkily up from the detritus of the cañon-side, and which turned out to be the botanists' *Polystichum scopulinum* (*polystichum* of the rock-shelves) — a trim, sturdy, slender-waisted little fern of the Far North, which somehow has drifted south and, like many a tourist since, has decided to remain. It is one of the rarest

SNOW BRIDGE IN SNOW CAÑON, SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS

of ferns in Southern California, this station in Snow Cañon and one other not far away being the only places in the south where it is known.

Another pleasurable digression from the Mill Creek trail is where Falls Creek joins Mill. Following up the latter stream a short distance, you are at the foot of one of the loveliest waterfalls in the south. Looking upward, you see the little creek, a couple of hundred feet above, leap out of a patch of blue sky and drop by a succession of precipitous pitches down a narrow, shadowy gorge, to be shattered at the bottom into a series of musical cascades. Waterfalls are infrequent in Southern California, and this one is so noteworthy that it seems a slight upon its beauty that it should have been given no more fanciful a name than the inept one it goes by — Big Falls.

Another mile and Mill Creek is joined by Vivian Creek, and near the point of junction the San Gorgonio trail begins, mounting by moist and ferny ways first in the twilight of great conifers, then into sunnier reaches and across the divide into the drainage of High Creek. On the bright autumnal day when I essayed this trail, all the mountain, rising steadily from six thousand feet at Mill Creek, was gay with flowers — brilliant masses of scarlet wild fuchsia, goldenrod, yellow helenium, vermilion paintbrush, scarlet penstemon, and cardinal mimulus, with here and there a few purple asters and soberer stretches of bird-beak — a joyous fellowship, whose cheerful aspect was supplemented by pleasant fragrances sagey and minty as I brushed

through, with a whiff now and then of a more heroic smell, as of that relative of the goldenrod with flat-topped clusters of dirty yellow flowers dubbed appropriately enough by botanists *Chrysothamnus nauseosus*. With increasing height clumps of chinquapin appeared, visible far ahead as dark patches clinging for dear life to the glaring white soil of the slopes. Under the continuous onslaughts of their remorseless antagonist the wind, their tops have been shorn to a monotonous level. Mingled with the interlacing trunks and branches of the chinquapin were occasional individuals of ceanothus — the buckbrush of the mountaineers — an ally of no mean worth in the ceaseless struggle with the blast which, after every lull, is up again and at it. California has no native chestnuts, but the sweet little nuts of this humble cousin, the chinquapin, are choice nibbling, if one has the patience to break into the fierce burs, and lend a special flavor, I think, to autumnal rambles among the higher mountain-tops. The shrub is ever green, the leaves of a sallow tinge above and densely coated beneath with a yellow nap, so that in certain lights I have imagined the plant enveloped in a sort of golden aura. It was a happy idea of the first botanist who described it to give it the specific tag of *chrysophylla*, the golden-leaved. Altogether it is quite a different appearing plant from the chinquapin that Easterners know and love in South Atlantic woodlands.[1]

[1] In Northern California and the Far Northwest there is a form called "Giant Chinquapin," which is a forest tree attaining at times a height of a hundred feet or more.

At a *ciénaga* traversed by a cold, tumbling brook, three and a half miles below the summit, is the last water of the climb. Here, if you are of the leisurely sort, taking a couple of days to the adventure of the peak, you do well to camp for the night, which may be done with some approach to luxury in a clump of tamarack on a spring bed of pine needles in the lee of a breastwork of logs, your feet to a hot camp-fire. Whether you have brought blankets or not, you will likely half perish with cold before morning, but it appears to be a fact practically without exception that one does not catch cold under such circumstances in a California summer, and a brief night of cat naps beneath the stars is of a restorative value as great as the seven or eight hours of less interrupted slumber indoors. There is, too, this advantage: you are awake to witness that ineffable miracle of the night fading into day, with Lucifer burning on the altar of the east. The Mexican peons have a pretty name for the morning star — *lucero atolero* — though it loses in translation, the "morning-mush-star." It is their signal for preparing the breakfast dish of *atole*, a good example to imitate. How tonic is the air at that chaste hour! But shrewdly cold even in midsummer on these upper heights. You refresh your fire, and while the water boils hover over the crackling warmth with a sort of fierce primitive joy that anthracite in an indoor grate has no power to awaken.

The elevation is now so great — in the neighborhood of ten thousand feet — that it makes a marked drain on your lung power, necessitating frequent

stops for breath. Unless you are hardened to such altitude, a mile or so an hour will be your limit. The trail leads over rounded ridges and along easy slopes through one of the loveliest and sunniest of woodlands, devoid of underbrush, with magnificent outlooks downward over descending tree-tops to the desert, to the Yucaipas, and to the valley lands, while upward and ahead the rock-strewn summit slopes sparkle in the sun. The firs, incense cedars, and yellow pines of the mountain's mid-region have now given way to almost pure stands of tamarack pine, their spreading crowns stirred to soft æolian music by the breeze, the ground beneath laid thick with fallen showers of trim chestnut-brown cones. This pine — *Pinus Murrayana* of the botanists — is the characteristic tree of a belt in the southern sierras beginning at about eight thousand feet elevation and continuing to nearly eleven thousand. The trunk has a notably clean, neat look, with bark of a light gray color broken into small, flaky scales that take on a reddish purple in some lights and glow strangely. The resemblance of the bark to that of the tamarack of cold mountain swamps of the East is perhaps responsible for the name by which this pine goes in California — an unfortunate one, however, as the true tamarack is a larch, not a pine. The thin bark of our tree, streaked with resin, makes it an easy prey to fire; but Nature has provided a counterbalance to this delicateness in the habit the cones have of persisting tight-closed upon the branches for several years. These can go through an ordinary forest fire unharmed as to the seed content,

and will then open, so that a fresh crop of young seedlings springs into vigorous life in a surprisingly short time after the passage of a conflagration.[1]

By and by you pass quite suddenly out of the standing timber and are following a dim trail over a treeless, skyey desert that heaves upward by easy pitches, gravelly and rock-strewn, toward the bald summit plainly visible ahead — a half-mile or so. Dainty little flowers star the way, cheerfully peeping out from the chinks and crevices of rocks. You recognize draba, arenaria, holodiscus, heuchera, and masses of heathery bryanthus rosy with bloom even in September. Patches of snow linger throughout the summer in sheltered hollows, and beside them Alpine buttercups cool their glowing faces. Among the rocks near by you may pluck the pygmy variety of that charming composite *Hulsea vestita*, with saffron rays, snuggling within a collar of woolly leaves pressed close to the earth; and here is the only spot in Southern California where you will find the tiny yellow flower which science has called *Raillardella argentea* — a jaunty little composite with silvery foliage, whose real home is in the northern high sierras.

I find I must correct that statement about the

[1] *Forest Trees of the Pacific Slope*, by Geo. B. Sudworth, who regards the tree as a form of *Pinus contorta*, the lodge-pole pine. *P. Murrayana*, the name preferred by other botanists, was bestowed by Professor Balfour, of Edinburgh University, in honor of Alexander Murray, Secretary of the Oregon Botanical Association of Edinburgh, which sent John Jeffrey to Oregon and California in 1852. Jeffrey discovered the tree in the Siskiyous; and, by the way, it is this Jeffrey whose name is borne by a variety of the yellow pine known as "Jeffrey Pine."

summit approaches being treeless. Emerging from the high woods of the tamarack belt into unobstructed sunlight, you look ahead over low clumps of shrubby growth hugging the ground here and there. You do not at first suspect them of being trees, but on a second look you see they are, though of a most unorthodox kind, the axis of the crown sometimes higher than the crown itself. Nothing can speak more eloquently of the windy weather on San Gorgonio's summit during a considerable part of the year than these queer trees beaten down to earth and held there, the knee of Boreas upon them, their growth diverted from the natural uprightness of trees to horizontality, their tops swept along at the height of a couple of feet above the ground and anchored by stubby trunks of a foot and a half or so. Sometimes the crowns are whirled about in a way to suggest a wheel, the wind-shorn tops as flat as tables. Under such shelter, I fancy, a man might creep and make shift to pass a windy night, curtained in by the prostrate branches. In other cases the bole is humped up above the flattened mass of distorted limbs, suggesting a knocked-down man stayed halfway in his efforts to regain his feet. A tree of superb grit, and a born fighter, to keep up the struggle with such bitter bleakness, when pleasanter conditions are a little down the hill. Why should it be worth the candle, you wonder?

At first blush I took these prostrates to be windblown tamaracks, but further inspection showed my mistake. They are limber pines — *Pinus flexilis* — so named from the remarkable flexibility of the

PROSTRATE LIMBER PINE, SUMMIT OF MOUNT SAN GORGONIO

branchlets, which can be tied into knots and loops without breaking, as you would do with a leather thong. The tree's discoverer and name-giver was Dr. Edwin James, botanist of Major Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1819–20. He found it contesting its footing with the wind upon that lofty peak known nowadays as "Pike's Peak," which James was the first to ascend and describe, and which for many years went by his name. Its original home, indeed, would appear to be in the Rocky Mountain region, whence perhaps it entered California, using the high peaks of the Great Basin as stepping-stones. Such, at least, is the picturesque surmise of Dr. H. M. Hall in "A Botanical Survey of the San Jacinto Mountain." Far from being always found in the depressed shape in which it occurs on the San Gorgonio summit, it assumes in more sheltered surroundings the dignity of an upstanding tree, thirty or forty feet high, with a noticeable white axis and outstretched branches at whose tips the needles are bunched in a manner resembling brushes. The fat seeds, according to James, were eaten by the Indians and French hunters of his day, and every Nevada miner knows the value of the timber in the walling and roofing of his drifts; but it is under the name of white pine that he recognizes it.

I sometimes wonder whether the growing taste for aeronautics is going to diminish the race's enthusiasm for mountain-climbing, just as the spread of automobiling has cooled the interest in the old-fashioned pastime of roadside walking; but perhaps

not. Our appreciation of a thing is usually in proportion to the energy expended in attaining it, and there is a certain sense of triumph and exhilaration that is in a class to itself in that first breathless view we get of the world beneath, when, after a long clamber, we emerge upon some Darien peak and stare about us. From San Gorgonio's summit all Southern California is spread below us, though not all is visible; for it is a land of haze deepening with distance into an impenetrable murk. Nevertheless, on average days the view is superb however you take it — northward along the bristly crest of the San Bernardino Range with Big Bear Lake set like a bright gem in the foreground; southward across the Pass to San Jacinto and the lesser peaks that look on Mexico; eastward upon the desert two miles below stretching away under a veil of mist from the Morongos at our feet to the Salton Sea and farther; westward past Mount San Bernardino to Old Baldy and the valley of San Gabriel to the Pacific flashing at the horizon, as the sun sinks to its setting. That San Bernardino peak is but six miles distant in an airline, and people have walked the rough ridge that binds it to San Gorgonio and so gone down by a good trail — but waterless — to the camps on Mill Creek, but the wise do not undertake it without plenty of daylight ahead of them.

Even in summer San Gorgonio may be storm-swept, for California's dry season is to be understood as strictly dry only in the lowlands. At altitudes above five thousand feet may be expected a summer rainfall that may mount to several inches on the

higher sierras bordering the desert, and mountain ranchers count upon it to carry certain crops to maturity that would otherwise need irrigation. As a general thing these summer rains are no more than passing showers ushered in with passionate electric storms. Sometimes they are severe enough to have tragic consequences. As I write I recall the experience of one George B. Grant on San Gorgonio in the last days of July, 1904. Grant was an industrious botanist, and when I first knew him, which was some years after the event I speak of, he still could not talk of it with composure. His story is as follows:

Desirous of studying the flora of the peak, Grant secured the company of his cousin, Walter Wheeler, of Covina, and a young mountain man named Dobbs, for a week's leisurely outing on the mountain. With three burros to ride and two more as pack-animals, they set out from a camp on Mill Creek unsuspicious of storm. They took the summit trail, camping overnight at the *ciénaga* of last water of which I spoke awhile back, and about ten the next morning reached the pile of boulders forming the topmost peak. By this time the sky was taking on an alarming aspect, angry with surging vapor, and with one great black cloud lowering directly over the peak.

"It was as black" — I quote Grant's words as well as I can — "as smoke from a locomotive funnel. I never thought of lightning, and I don't think the others did. What we were afraid of was a hurricane or hailstorm. Suddenly there was a crash of thunder and a blinding flash. The bolt stunned the guide,

and sent him plumb crazy, so I had to hold him by force to the ground for half an hour, or he would have thrown himself off the mountain. A second bolt that followed killed Wheeler instantly, ripping his clothes to shreds and leaving him almost naked. Then a third bolt struck close to me while I was struggling with Dobbs, who cried like a baby and was calling for his mother. I could n't make him realize what had happened. Other bolts followed striking here and there on neighboring buttes, and there I was with a dead man and a lunatic on my hands, and no help so far as I knew within a dozen miles, and the mountain wild with storm."

The story is too harrowing to continue in detail, but to put the rest in a few words Grant left the two finally to search for assistance, and fortunately found a camper four miles down the mountain. They managed between them to bring Dobbs (who by this time had recovered his senses, but not his memory) and the body of Wheeler to this camp. Leaving Grant and Dobbs to watch the remains of their friend — it was now night — the stranger set off for help. In the morning he returned with a rescue party, and in a deluge of rain and hail, which increased in fury with the morning, the descent was begun, the body of Wheeler strapped to a burro's back. To make a bad matter worse, the animal, maddened by the pelting hail, shook his burden loose by and by, and it had to be left in the brush while the rest went on with Grant who was now in a state of exhaustion. Meantime the storm played havoc with the trail, now washing it out with tor-

rents of rain, now burying it from sight under sheets of hail. On the arrival of the party at Mill Creek, a lot of fresh men were dispatched for the abandoned remains of Wheeler, but so cut up was the trail that it took thirty hours of continuous labor night and day to accomplish the task. Grant was a nervous wreck and took to his bed. As for Dobbs, he was more or less out of his head for ten days; and to this day, they say, the sight of lightning unmans him.

And that is the story of one mountain outing in Southern California's dry season. Thoreau says somewhere that there was never yet a storm but it was æolian music to a healthy and innocent ear. What tune, I wonder, would the philosopher of Walden have picked out of that storm? However, like so many occurrences in the weather of the Land of Sunshine, that one was out of the usual.

DESERT FACES

Let us probe the silent places, let us seek what luck betide us;
Let us journey to a lonely land I know.
There's a whisper in the north wind, there's a star agleam to guide us,
And the Wild is calling, calling . . . let us go.

ROBERT W. SERVICE

I

OLD SANTA ROSA

SITTING in the shadow of the palms at some oasis village of the desert, as Indio or Mecca, and looking westward, you lift your eyes to high mountains, the desert's western wall. Their crests bristle with pines, but their faces sloping desertward are treeless, dry, and sunburned as the desert itself. You see them a continuous range, springing out of the mists below the Mexican border and lengthening northwestward, a good hundred miles of gradually rising bulk which culminates in the colossal, wind-blown mass of San Jacinto Peak, 10,805 feet above the sea. A unique feature among our mountains, this desert face of San Jacinto — an abrupt uplift of almost two miles above the desert's open floor. Other peaks are loftier, but either they are rooted in so much more elevated levels, as Mount Whitney, that their height above the plain is less, or their rise from the plain is more gradual, as Mount San Gorgonio.

In old times these desert faces of the sierra, permanently seamed and wrinkled with cañons and arroyos, mostly dry in summer, but carrying in winter the run-off of the season's storms that break upon the crest, were lightly scratched with trails by which the Indians of the desert climbed to their mountain hunting-grounds for deer and piñons; by which, too, the hill people came down when snow

began to blockade them in their highland homes, in quest of the milder wintering of the desert. Obliterated now are most of those ancient pathways; yet some, all but indistinguishable, may still be followed by the trailwise, threading an inconceivable chaos of shattered rock and burnished boulder, now skirting dizzy ledges where a misstep might mean broken bones or death, now zigzagging through wild rock gardens of so rare a loveliness of bloom as would add charm to the parks of civilization. Often you must dismount and lead your animals up or down devil's staircases of jagged stone, hedged with cat's-claw acacia, vicious cholla, and the bayonets of the yucca. But for the "ducks" — small stones placed at intervals on top of larger rocks to serve as markers to the trail — you would never keep in the way. You find pleasure in training your eye to pick them out in advance — rather a nice matter to distinguish this act of man from the casual act of Nature, which it simulates.

It was a morning of late April when the Professor and I set out from the desert to follow one of these dim byways that should lead us with fortune favoring to the site of an abandoned Indian village to the eastward of Toro Peak — as wild a region, perhaps, as the Southern California mountains afford, scantily watered, uninhabited and unvisited except by an occasional wandering enthusiast like ourselves or a "cowman" in search of his strayed stock. Toro is a striking object rising to a height of eight thousand seven hundred feet, the loftiest of a cluster of mountains jutting into the desert and called the Santa

Rosas. They are about twenty-five miles in an air-line southeast of San Jacinto Peak, and a part with it of the same general range that continues southward into Mexico and known to the early Spaniards as the Sierra Madre de California. We were ahorseback, each of us supplied with saddlebags containing a week's requirement of provisions in concentrated form, and a roll of blankets at the cantle; for, although we had but a scant score of miles to cover as the aeroplane goes, the terrestrial way to our destination was a sinuous one through a wilderness whose rocky steeps would have nonplussed any horse but those trained by Indians as ours were. One was a sedate chestnut of mature years belonging to the Professor, who had brought him up in ways of leisureliness and a habit of being surprised at nothing; the other, hired for the occasion, was a comparatively youthful pony of that peculiar complexion of hide, white speckled with reddish brown, spoken of by horsy folk as "flea-bitten." He was warranted to be an experienced trailer, and also to make a beeline for home if allowed to remain unhitched for the space of the batting of an eye; wherefore Romualdo, his Cahuilla owner, had adjured us, as we valued our legs and peace of mind, to tie him up nightly with sureness.

We chose a route by way of Palm Cañon, because it offered a sight of a unique natural forest — one of the most enchanting to be found within the limits of the United States — a pure stand of Washingtonias or California fan-palms, which occupy the bed of the cañon for a distance of several miles. The

sun was nearing the crest of the western ranges when we rode up to a barbed-wire gate that marked the entrance to the cañon and the Cleveland National Forest. Within, we found ourselves in an aisle of palms, and, as we filed along the narrow trail beside a stream of clear water hastening desertward, it seemed incredible that we were in the United States, so unlike the conventional American woodland was this that we were threading. Palms before us, palms behind us, and palms on either hand; seedling palms thrusting unopened fans from out the mould of the trail's side; stout middle-aged palms, their trunks shingled with the persistent dead leaves hanging head downward to the ground and clothing the tree as with Dutch skirts; grandfatherly palms, scarred and naked of trunk, veterans of fires that had shorn them of the leafy thatch which Nature had obviously provided as a protection from the scorching winds of the desert. Noble trees in their best development, rising to a height of eighty or ninety feet, and fittingly gracing the name given them by the European palmographer Wendland, "in honor of the great American George Washington." [1] The vitality of the Washington Palm is noteworthy, that it should have survived the re-

[1] His description was based on some cultivated trees growing in a nursery at Ghent, Belgium, in 1879. Seeds had been sent out years before by collectors on the Pacific coast, it would seem. The palm was first reported to the world by Major Emory, U.S.A., who led a party of soldiers in 1846 across the continent and discovered a few trees growing near a spring in the Carrizo Wash at the desert foot of the Laguna Mountain. The spring is still there, a seepage of fair water in a mat of salt-grass, but the palm trees are no longer there, having been cut down long since.

IN PALM CAÑON, SAN JACINTO MOUNTAIN

peated burnings to which old individuals have been subjected by both Indians and whites — the former to make easier the gathering of the clustered, thin-coated berries which once formed an item in the aboriginal diet, and the latter to put to rout certain vermin which nested in the thatch and disturbed them when camping near. There is no means of knowing the age of such patriarchs, since the palm, being an endogen, does not grow by adding annual rings to its girth of trunk as most trees do; so there is nothing for it but to guess. Perhaps a century would be right; perhaps two. Here and there amid the litter of droppings from the trees — mostly the slender woody stalks upon which the berry clusters had been borne — lusty young seedlings were pushing up giving promise of the forest's future.

A wood like this was too rare to be hurried through; and so we strewed ourselves a springy mattress of the arrowweed which bordered the little creek, spread our blankets, and gave ourselves unreservedly to the enchantment of a moonlit night in this forest primeval where neither murmuring pine nor hemlock was, nor bearded moss. Instead of the last, the leafless mistletoe of the desert hung in witches' brooms in the mesquite near by and discharged upon the air its peculiar penetrating fragrance. Berries of the old year still clung to some of the branchlets, exquisite creations suggesting pearls suffused delicately with rose. In the moonlight the great ribbed fronds of the tree crowns glistened like silver, and as the fingers of the wind lightly drew across them they gave out a soft music to which the

ripple of the water in the arrowweeds made accompaniment. People coming upon these noble trees, unlooked for in so arid a wilderness, are always amazed at their presence and invariably ask how did they get here — did the Spaniards plant them? — as if any man could tell how any tree originated anywhere on earth. What more can essentially be said of the matter than that they are of the Lord's right-hand planting — here from the beginning.

Out of the palms, but still skirting the cañon, an old, half-vanished trail winds up the mountain's bare face through a litter of broken rock and geologic tailings to Vandeventer's Flat. Mile after mile we plodded upward, following the general direction of Palm Creek. The region, desolate enough to the eye schooled only in conventional prettiness, being in fact uptilted desert, was full of the desert's peculiar witchery, with magnificent views ahead of pine-crested mountain heights and even a snow-field or two, and behind were the desert's palpitating sands and shifting colors. Tender wild flowers of a dozen hues — golden chænactis, ultramarine phacelias and red castilleias, penstemons in scarlet and salazarias in blue and white — bloomed trustfully among bayonet-leaved yuccas and savage cactuses, a sort of botanic version of the millennial day when lion and lamb shall be at peace together. Apropos of cactus, it was interesting to see how expert in a certain sort of plant knowledge bitter experience had made our horses. Against the barrel-like bisnagas, bristling with huge spines that are nevertheless comparatively harmless because curved at the

point into innocuous hooks, the animals brushed with indifference; but let a cholla heave in sight — particularly that vicious species whose burlike joints break off at a touch and embed themselves in the flesh by their barbed spines so tenaciously that a surgical operation is almost required to extract them — and Fleabite and Billy would prick up their ears and make a safe détour.

Somewhere along here a flower peeping out from a tangle of bushes caught the Professor's eye, and, stooping from his horse as he passed, he plucked it. It was modeled like a dandelion, but pure white with pink stripes on the back. He stroked it lovingly.

"Rafinesquia," he said. "A pretty flower, but especially interesting to me because the name it bears commemorates one of the oddest fish in the annals of American Science, and that is some distinction, Constantine Rafinesque. Let me tell you what I know about him. To begin with, he started queer — an unusual hodge-podge of a make-up — born in Turkey of a French father and a German mother who had her rearing in Greece — what sort of a nationality would you call that? Then, to make the mixture more complex, he went knocking around the Mediterranean while still a baby, sometimes in Asia, then in Africa, again in Sicily. While still a boy he landed in Philadelphia, where he became a merchant's clerk by day and a student of botany by night and on holidays. Not only of botany, however. Everything in the line of natural history was fish to his net, and he became such a collector as never was, I guess, of plants, shells, fishes, ani-

mals, Indian vocabularies, minerals, butterflies, and heaven knows what else, rushing into print with his discoveries, which, among other wonders, included a dozen new species of thunder and lightning![1] Think of that, will you, giving genus and species to thunder and lightning!

"Well, he was an inveterate walker, and one time with another he tramped over a large part of the Atlantic seaboard in a coat of yellow nankeen loose as a bag, a nankeen waistcoat buttoned up to the chin with enormous pockets always stuffed with specimens, tight pantaloons, and black hair hanging to his shoulders. Does n't that sound like a character of Dickens? Turning up in Kentucky, he made the acquaintance of Audubon, and a costly acquaintance it was for the ornithologist; for during the night — Audubon took him in, of course, pioneer-fashion — during the night Rafinesque heard a bat in the room which he infallibly knew must be a new species, and, picking up the first object that he found to his hand in his chase, and which happened to be Audubon's favorite fiddle — a Cremona, if you please — he smashed it to smithereens in a swipe at the bat! He must have been a hard man to live with. He had been married in Sicily, but his wife, assuming he was dead and being no Penelope, took another husband, and after that the world was his home and science his bride, hardship and poverty his portion. He died about eighty

[1] I think the Professor is indebted for this picturesque item about thunder and lightning to Dr. David Starr Jordan's *Science Sketches*, wherein is an article on Rafinesque.

years ago in a garret in Philadelphia, with no other furniture in the room than the cot he lay on and his stacked-up collections. His landlord, they say, was for selling his body to a medical college for rent arrearage, but a botanical friend of Rafinesque's prevented that humiliation. But for all his penury, he thought it worth while to make a will, which is a literary curiosity and pathetic in view of his thinking himself a man of property. He and Colonel Mulberry Sellers would have been rare comrades. It seems, with assets of six dollars cash (if I remember right), a gold medal awarded him by the Paris Geographical Society, eight wagonloads of old books and natural history specimens, some herbarium paper, and the manuscript of what he called the 'Medical Flora of the United States' — all of which lumped together amounted in money value to less than the expenses of settling the estate, so that his executors found themselves in the end thirteen dollars out of pocket for their trouble — out of such assets, I say, the poor devil made the grandest bequests, and meant them honestly. First, his immortal soul to the Creator and Supreme Ruler of the worlds in space, to be sent along to whatever of those worlds the Lord deemed fit. Right and proper enough, for he had a soul to deliver; it was the money part where the pathos comes in. After handing around ten thousand dollars of invisible money to ends I now forget, he provided for the residue to go to the founding of a girls' orphan school on the plan of Girard College for boys; or, if that did n't go through, then the money should go for a free public

library to be housed in a fireproof building. Now that was really a notable will if there had been any money back of it; for at that time no institution of either sort existed in America, nor, I guess, did fireproof buildings. So if men are to be judged, as some kindly philosophers maintain, by what they try to do rather than by actual accomplishment, queer old Rafinesque, who saw ahead of his times, is worthy a niche in the hall of remembrance; and maybe, after all, if he can look down from that other world in space, he is as content to find his name attached to a fragile desert flower, immortal as the returning spring, as he would be to see it carved on a fireproof building, which might not be fireproof, after all."

Here the Professor, ending his sentimental discourse, laid the flower between the leaves of a ragged notebook and thrust it into his hip pocket for pressing; and by and by we came to Little Paradise — a bit of emerald meadow in the shade of fine old cottonwoods beside the whispering waters of Upper Palm Creek, paradisaical, indeed, to one arriving hot and thirsty from the desert. There, leaving the Vandeventer trail to our right, we turned into the cañon of Potrero Creek, and after two or three hours of steady climbing came in a squall of snow to Pinyon Flat.

Pinyon Flat is a sandy, rock-strewn tableland a couple of thousand acres in extent at four thousand feet above the sea, remarkable as bearing what is said to be the most extensive stand of one-leaf pine — that is, piñon — to be found in our southern mountains. An endearing little tree is the piñon, in

LITTLE PARADISE, SAN JACINTO MOUNTAIN

height rarely over twenty-five feet, oftener ten or fifteen, short and rough of trunk, with a rather shapely pyramidal crown in youth which becomes flattened and drooping in age, as an old felt hat hangs down at the brim. There is no more luxurious outdoor bed that I know than the spongy, needle-packed ground beneath some nonogenarian piñon, whose branches pendent to the earth curtain you in as snugly as the hangings of an old-fashioned four-poster. It is a characteristic tree of the dry desert-ward slopes of the California sierras from the Mexican border to Mono County and beyond. It was first noticed by Frémont during that memorable incursion of his into California in 1844; and for several reasons engaged his particular attention — its agreeable nutritious seeds, its noticeable and pleasant fragrance, and especially the fact that its needles, instead of being disposed in bundles of two to five each, occur singly, one in a sheath. In this respect it is, indeed, unique among our pines, and because of this peculiarity Dr. Torrey named it *Pinus monophylla*.[1] The smooth, thin-shelled seeds, as large as peas and mottled brown and yellow, are shed from the cones in the late summer and autumn of the second year and are delectable morsels to any palate; while to the Indian in his natural estate the autumnal piñon harvest, in which the whole family engaged, camping out among the trees, was one of the outstanding events of the year. It was a picturesque, sticky business, for the tree is very resinous in

[1] By another botanist it was called *P. Fremontiana*, in honor of its discoverer, but this name did not hold.

all its parts; and writers of a past generation, like Muir and Palmer, have described in sympathetic detail their sight of it. To-day this activity, like so much that was picturesque in the old Indian life, has practically gone out; though not absolutely, as was evidenced by the charred remains of an old fire or two which caught our eyes, where plainly green cones had been heated to release the seeds prematurely — the immemorial aboriginal practice. Of compelling charm we found the young, half-grown burs of the year, neat and trim, suggesting the matured cones of the great sequoia.

Pinyon Flat looks south and upward — five miles south and four thousand feet upward — to Santa Rosa Peak, loosely swathed that day in tattered streamers of vapor driven by a cold wind out of the west. Evening — I can hardly think of the same day, perhaps the next — evening found us on the peak's thither side at that abandoned village of the Santa Rosa Indians among the pines of which mention was made in an earlier chapter. This was not the particular village of our quest, but intermediate in Santa Rosan history between that home of the ancients and the present rancheria at Vandeventer's, where the last remnant of the tribe is living out the placid twilight of its existence by the grace of Washington. From the abounding yellow pine saplings we broke off some armfuls of the tufted branch ends and spread ourselves a fragrant bed in one of the decaying cabins, which gave us indifferent shelter from the nipping cold; and, after enjoying the reflected glories of a dramatic sunset which lit up with

momentary flame the range to the east of us, we turned in to be sung to sleep by the wind in a thousand pines.

We were out at dawn making our toilet in a thicket of willow and wild rose through which a brook of icy water stepped valleyward in placid little cascades; and, having dispatched a breakfast of oatmeal and raisins, we proceeded to scout out the trail which our map indicated began there for Old Santa Rosa under Toro. The mountain traveler acquires in time a certain trail-sense, the ability to *feel* a trail where none is apparent to the eye; so, after half an hour's search and without knowing just how we got there, we found ourselves in a dim trail which we *felt* was right. Pursuing its wavering leadings through a brushy tangle that almost barred progress at times, we scrambled at last out of the pines upon a sunlit ridge from which we looked down upon a tumbled wilderness of bare slopes, treeless hogbacks, and dry cañons breaking away past Coyote Mountain to that arm of the desert thrust up between two toes of the sierra, and known as "Borrego Valley." A dozen miles away its gray sands palpitated in the heat, and beyond that, had the atmosphere been clearer, the lower end of the Salton Sea and much of the Imperial Valley would have appeared; but as it was, there was only haze. The trail now became plainer, following the contour of the mountain in and out and up and down, but on the whole descending. Clinging to the treeless slopes were budding yuccas; clumps of eriogonum, all but hidden under their massed pompons of

bloom; scarlet penstemons; manzanita, hung with a myriad pink flowers, each like a tiny, glowing lantern. Once a spot of dampness, from which sweet water trickled, bore irises and shooting stars and the springing leaves of goldenrod. We seemed to be traversing hanging wild gardens on the edge of a virgin world. No sound broke the stillness except the clatter of an occasional rolling stone struck by a horse's hoof; and there was no wind. The sunshine, hot and dry, filled us with indescribable comfort after the chill of the day before. We loafed along and made a long nooning, for according to the map Old Santa Rosa was but a few miles on.

With the lengthening shadows we came to a flat that was silver gray with a dense growth of the desert sage — *Artemisia tridentata* — at the head of a small cañon. It was easy to imagine it the once cultivated field of a vanished people, which, after abandonment, had been reclaimed by the unforgetting mother, Nature, ever watchful to reëstablish her wildings in business. There was a weak spring under the hill, a few rock heaps that might once have been walls, a tumbledown wooden gateway or two, and a number of rotting poles that had perhaps formed the framework of an Indian *jacal*. Mescal plants and low, acorn-bearing oaks dotted the mountain-side; these with water might constitute a basis for Indian existence. If this were Old Santa Rosa — and what else could it be? on all the mountain-side the map indicated no other place — we had come a long way for small game. We cooked and ate our supper in lowness of spirits, the moon for our

lantern. To add physical discomfort to our case, a cold wind sought us out, and, had it not been for the lucky shelter of a clump of Wislizenius oaks in the lee of which we made our beds, we should have fared badly enough. As it was, we slept but indifferently because of the howling and beating of the insane blast against our windbreak.

Our one desire next morning was to get away from a spot which we believed we should always remember as the Camp of the Wild-Goose Chase, but, to our perplexity, there seemed to be no trail out — only that by which we had come in — another indication that we had really reached what was left of the old village. Above our camp was a mesa from which the country for miles ahead lay naked and plain as a map — gravel and rock and xerophytic scrub — with one main barranca or cañon working its sinuous way to the open desert. We were determined not to turn back on our tracks. Trail or no trail, there seemed no reason why we could not make a way through that open wilderness and be at some desert ranch by nightfall. We filled our two canteens at the sluggish spring, let our beasts drink their skins full, and set out along the mesa. Its hard gravelly floor afforded good going for the horses. Gradually it narrowed, and in a little while we found ourselves following a ridge that extended like a finger between two great gulches. Suddenly we were aware that the animals were in a trail, dim almost to invisibility, but indeed a trail with "ducks" marking it. The Professor pulled up and pointed across one of the cañons to the gray, bare mountain-side beyond. A

wavering line of dark verdure began in a green dimple well up the slope and ended in a broad sandy wash at the foot.

"Hark!" he said.

Faintly there rose from below a sound like the susurrus of a wind, but the morning was breathless. What we heard must be the murmur of running water.

"What asses we were! Over there is Old Santa Rosa."

And there our trail led us; first down into the bottom of Rock-House Cañon, and across a wash to a broad trail, badly storm-gutted, up which it wound to a sunny mesa set like a sagging shelf against the mountain and breaking off precipitously at the west to a deepish cañon, at whose head rose the peak of Toro. Southward a magnificent panorama opened of grim, barren mountain ranges, lonely cañons, rock and scrub, dropping at the horizon to pure desert. In all the gray expanse was not a sign of water save the one brook murmuring in the willows and alders, no evidence of contemporary human life; but of an ancient life once active here there were abundant vestiges — ruins of rock houses, a parched and broken reservoir, rotted fences and basket granaries, broken pottery, mortars and rubbing-stones, arrow-straighteners, and what not. At the back a trail wound around the mountain to a spring gushing out from beneath two huge alders — a lovely, green, peaceful spot, where we may imagine the Santa Rosa damsels of long ago coming to fill their water-jars and gossip, glad of escape, if it were summer, from the persistent sunshine of their treeless village.

IN ROCK-HOUSE CAÑON, SANTA ROSA MOUNTAINS

The site of this ancient rancheria afforded an interesting object lesson in how primitive man could live, and live quite well, in an environment where his civilized brother would find existence intolerable. Barren as these desertward faces of the sierra seem, they are in reality exceedingly fruitful in a wild way, and a cursory inventory of the wild plants we found growing in and near the place footed up quite a respectable total available for food, clothing, medicine, and shelter. To itemize a few, there was, of course, the acorn, the California Indian's staff of life; the piñon, only less valuable in the menu of the desert mountaineer; the mescal, an agave whose budding flower spike when baked is still one of the nutritious delicacies of the Indian; and there were two species of yucca, one with edible fruit, and one with edible stalks and flowers. Both yucca and mescal are also sources of a fiber which was formerly woven into cloth mats and rope. Certain of the cactus tribe represented on this arid slope, not only had edible fruit, but the tender young joints of one sort — *Platopuntia* — were peeled and boiled before the spines had hardened, and eaten as a vegetable, while the seeds were a source of flour. The berries of the manzanita yielded a palatable cider; the bulbs of liliaceous plants, as the brodiæas and mariposa tulips, were eaten raw or cooked; the dried beans of the mesquite were pounded into meal and the pulp of the green beans was made into a confection. Numbers of wild seeds, as those of chia and other sages, were regularly harvested in season and ground into meal for mush-making. In a half-hour's walk

about the old village we counted sixteen wild plants of edibility, three yielding textile fiber, four that even the whites regard of medicinal worth, and one capital dye-plant. Add to these such animal contributions to larder and wardrobe as the mountain sheep, deer, rabbits, and squirrels, brought down by the hunters' bows and arrows, and for building material the timber offerings of the near-by pines and cedars, mountain mahogany and sumac,[1] clay for pottery, willow and mesquite for coarse basketry, and squaw-weed (*Rhus trilobata*) and grass for fine, and you have the physical basis of that remote urban life on a desert mountain-slope. Extras would be acquired through trade with the people of the desert and seashore. Evidence of intercourse with the white man's world was furnished by an occasional bone button or a shred of woolen pantaloon, and by the presence among the ruins of the Old World plantain. This is one of those humble plants originating perhaps in the cradle of the race, described by Oliver Wendell Holmes as

> "social weeds,
> Man's mute companions, following where he leads";

and it was Longfellow, was it not? who aptly called it "the white man's foot." Doubtless it reached California during the Franciscan mission period.

Our stroll finished, the Professor and I sat upon

[1] *Rhus ovata.* The Western sumacs are of very different aspect from the species of the Atlantic seaboard, attaining in some instances the proportions of small trees. The wood is hard and heavy, and is considerably used for fence and corral posts both by Indians and pioneering whites. The conspicuous red color of the heartwood has gained for at least one species the popular name of mahogany.

the broken wall of what had apparently been a sweat-house and gazed with contentment across the darkling gulf of Rock-House Cañon to the jagged rock spires of the San Ysidro Mountains, plum-purple against a pale blue sky. It seemed to us as though life in Old Santa Rosa might not have been half bad.

The ghosts that walk Old Santa Rosa's weedy ruins, if such there be, disturbed us not, and we set out the next morning to return desertward by another way. It proved to be a trail of Tantalus, deluding us first into a blind cañon with vertical walls shutting off further progress; then to the brink of a precipice falling away sheer to the desert, which mocked us there below with its nearness and its inaccessibility, for, hunt as we might, we could find no way down for horses. Skirting the edge, leading the animals, tearing our clothes on Spanish daggers and cutting our shoes on broken flints and jagged rocks, we spent the hot hours of midday under a pitiless sun in fruitless quest. At last the Professor's sharp eyes lit upon what gave hope of being the trail's continuance, and we followed along with lightened hearts only to see it vanish in a wilderness of scattered rocks. Scanning the declivity ahead, we could see across a dip in the mountain-side a promising track leading in the right direction around a jutting spur. Urging on our dispirited horses, we reached it to find it another disappointment — a mountain-sheep walk, scattering out into a maze of tracks to no purpose. The sun had now set, and

the gathering twilight was making further progress down the gullied, rock-strewn steep, uncertain and rather hazardous. It began to look like a dry camp in our tracks. The one alternative was to slide the horses in a beeline to the foot of the mountain, come what might. We decided to chance this. So dismounting and dragging the reluctant beasts by the reins, stumbling, slipping, and coasting on their haunches and ours, loosening avalanches of stones, gravel, and dust in a wild scramble, we came at last tumbling, torn and breathless, but with a *jubilate* in our hearts, into the sandy bed of a dry wash, the saddles about the horses' ears and one set of saddle-bags gone.

Gathering ourselves together, we looked about. A strip of saltbush and *guatamote* lined the wash promising feed for the "cavalry," as old Vancouver would say, and we ourselves could fast one night; but far down the desert — perhaps a mile — we caught the gleam of a solitary light. We knew it must be shining in the window of some desert rancher's home. We had spent a week beyond the sound of any voices but our own, and the thought of human fellowship again lured us on. In half an hour we rode beneath the shadow of some trees into a flood of light from an open door through which we could see a family gathering to supper; and shortly we sat at a civilized board, where to our surprise Christian grace was said, and there was music of a woman's voice and children's prattle. So even in the desert places the seed of orderly living is sown and germinates.

II

ANTONIO BAKES MESCAL AND TELLS SOMEWHAT OF THE STARS

ON the desert faces of the mountains from the Santa Rosas southward are extensive wild fields of mescal, the *Agave deserti* of the botanists. This is the American cousin of the Mexican century plant of civilization, which it much resembles, but with shorter leaves. It revels in the open sunshine of arid slopes amid the rocky débris left by ancient geologic catastrophes, where it thrives happily under the desiccating blasts of the desert, but usually in situations lifted well above the desert floor. A plant of leisurely development, it is quite well along in its teens, or possibly out of them, before the supreme effort of its life — its blossoming — occurs. Once it is ripe for this business, it transacts it quickly. A juicy bud, resembling the tip of a huge asparagus sprout, thrusts up its head from the heart of the clustered, dagger-like leaves, and rapidly rises upon a lengthening stalk until at a height of eight or ten feet it breaks into a great, loose shower of small, bell-shaped yellow flowers. This accomplished, the plant shrivels up and dies, its generation being continued by offsets from the base as well as by the dispersal of seeds.

Up to a generation or so ago, while the Indian was poor, as my friend Antonio Cuevas, himself an Indian, expresses it, the mescal was a valuable food

source to both the mountain aborigines and those of the desert; and the budding of the plant in March was the signal for tribal repairings to the fields to cut and bake, to feast and to dance, to sing songs about the nightly camp-fires and rehearse the tales of the ancient people. The practice is not yet entirely obsolete, though few but the old folk participate in it any more. Antonio, though he did not look like an old man, ranged himself in that class, and one spring he promised to take me "mescaling" with him, so that I might observe the process from a to izzard.

It was early April — April 4th, if you will know precisely — before I could get away with a congenial comrade to the adventure. This was too late for the fields of San Felipe, which would have been the best; but there was likelihood that the higher altitude of the San Ysidro slopes, beyond Montezuma Valley and overlooking Borrego Valley, would still be in bud. Antonio lives on the Volcan Indian Reservation, near Santa Ysabel, and he appeared at our appointed rendezvous near there early in the morning, in a rattle-trap of a spring wagon, jingling at every joint, drawn by two scrawny Indian ponies much too small for their harness. With him was a white-haired, white-mustached old Indian who at once left us, setting off afoot across country without responding to some remark I addressed him. "He no sabe here," observed Antonio, touching his ear, by which I was to know that the ancient was dull of hearing.

Antonio was a smallish, thin-faced Indian, rather leaden of complexion, and of an aspect totally unlike

the average Californian aborigine, who is usually heavy to obesity and very dusky. Inclined at first to taciturnity, he soon became cheerfully talkative in exceedingly queer English seasoned with an occasional dash of Spanish. Touching his nativity and family he gave me this naïve bit of information: "First time I was born was in San Diego, sabe? Maybe that was maybe fifty-two years ago, I dunno. Yes, I have some children" — reflectively — "one boy and about six girls."

The valley of Santa Ysabel, always lovely, is never lovelier than in the early spring, when the smooth-cheeked lomas that edge it about, green as emerald from the winter rains, take on a special beauty from the blue blossoms of the mountain lilacs overspreading the slopes by the acre, and the leafing of the Kellogg oaks. The infant leaves of this oak unfold in tones of pink and crimson, and envelop the tree in a filmy veil of warm color, which after a few days fades exquisitely into a tender green. Down the floor of the valley go the clear waters of Santa Ysabel Creek, between meadows dotted with buttercups and at intervals dappled with the shadows of corpulent sycamores. Here, Antonio informed me, was the former home of his forbears; at such and such a spot on the hill his aunt had a cabin, there where a clump of live-oaks grew amid outcroppings of flat rock; and there as a boy he would watch her gathering acorns, which she would divest of their shells and, putting the kernels in cuplike depressions of the rock, she would pound, pound, pound them until they were turned to meal. She was dead now, buried

in the *campo santo* by the chapel, with others of her people; where, I do not doubt, Antonio burned a candle for her every All Souls' Night. At noon we ate our lunch by one of these rocks, which was literally honeycombed with these ancient *morteros*, choked up by years of solidified dust, dried leaves, and the rejected shells of squirrels' nut feasts. To-day the valley is a great cattle ranch, and the aboriginal inhabitants of other years have been pushed back into the surrounding hills to scratch out a living there as best they may, the valley lands being regarded as rather too choice for mere Indians.

I was curious to learn Antonio's attitude with respect to the misfortunes of his race, and should not have been surprised at some bitter comment as we rode along and he pointed out the scenes of local happenings; but he was by no means disposed to whine about the case, referring to the facts quite simply as though they were immutable and went naturally with the general scheme of life. Quite as worthy of consideration, he seemed to think, was the sight of the squirrels, which he delighted to call my attention to, as they whisked about the oak branches, and of the meadowlark singing on a fence-post, showing off his yellow shirt and black necktie.

"Señor Calandro," he remarked, introducing me to the bird by his *patois* name. "Him *hombre; mujer* she no got."

From which I was to understand that the lady of the species was less gay in color than the man.

His keen eyes took in with interest every detail of our route, and he delighted to school me in the

Spanish and Diegueño names of the wayside flowers and trees, with running comment on their Indian uses — how the leaves of carrizo, the reed, were sugary in August and made a sweet drink if boiled to a syrup; not very sweet, I was to understand, but sweet enough; how wild peony roots should be dried for making into a tea "for bavies when they make teeth"; and how boiled miner's lettuce, which he called *quelite*, added grace to a dish of beans. The oaks he differentiated like a connoisseur, and had separate names for each sort. The lovely Kellogg oaks, then draped in misty pink veils, he called, very musically, *manoliones;* the coast live-oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) were to him *encinos;* the cañon live-oak (*Q. chrysolepis*) he spoke of as *roble*, wherein I found him in conflict with my dictionary, which would have *roble* to be a deciduous oak, as the cañon live-oak is not. The little scrub oak that thicketed the hills he referred to as *encinillo*, that is, oakling. Of *chaparro*, as a name for this evergreen oak, he had no knowledge, but thought it a good name, for, said he, "Mexicans call a little short fellow *chaparro*" — which suggests a possible etymology of our word "chaparral," a place of any stunted, shrubby growths, not necessarily oaks; and this accords with the fact.

The ponies, if not swift, were steady travelers, and evening found us among the green pastures of the Cañada Buena Vista on the farther confines of the beautiful Warner's Ranch — the Rancho San José del Valle of the Mexicans — where we camped in the light of the stars filtered through the leafless

branches of an ancient sycamore. A stone's-throw away was an old rambling house, then abandoned, which had once been a station on the route of the Butterfield stages of sixty-odd years ago. Dreamily smoking cigarettes after supper, Antonio spun me penny-dreadful yarns, with much relish, of murders, hangings, hold-ups, and carouses for which the place was notorious in the "*malo hombre*" days, when it was quite *en règle* to carry a gun on the hip, a chip on the shoulder, and get "sort of drunk," as he naïvely expressed it. We awakened at dawn to the sight of a grassy landscape gray with dew, soon asparkle under the level rays of the rising sun with a myriad evanescent jewels. Cattle dotted the valley for miles, its emerald floor overlaid in places with solid mats of pink alfilerilla and golden baeria. It was a solitary region, but surprisingly boasted a schoolhouse at a lonely crossroads. Besides that, our only contact with humanity for hours was our meeting a languid team slouching up from the desert, a dejected hound tied to the rear axle by a leash of baling wire. From fence-post and wayside bank the meadowlarks made us salutation in fluty notes that alternated with the plaint of unseen doves. An Edenic world it seemed, of primal innocence, untouched by money-seekers.

We were following one of the main highways used by transcontinental travelers in pre-railway days — the road by which General Kearny marched into California to plant the Stars and Stripes there, and over which a few years later sweating immigrant trains creaked and groaned, laboring up through

Warner's Pass by the San Felipe from the desert. Leaving the Pass to our right, we entered by and by a dim road leading up into hillier country scrubby with low oaks and juniper. Antonio's plant gossip had been running upon a shrub from whose root his people used to make a famous dye, and somewhere here near the roadside his sharp eye detected it. Stopping the team, we got out for a closer look. It was a small bushy evergreen with prickly, holly-like leaves and racemes of showy yellow flowers. It was easy to recognize it as a species of barberry — a genus but sparsely represented in Southern California, though three or four species occur northward, of which the best-known is the so-called "Oregon grape," the *Mahonia aquifolium* of the nurserymen. Purists in botanical nomenclature have dropped the good old name of Mahonia, I believe, and call our Western barberries Berberis instead. To sentimental herborizers like myself, who find pleasure in personal associations, this seems a pity, as Mahonia preserves the memory of a notable figure, else likely to be forgot, in the annals of American botany — one Bernard M'Mahon, an enthusiastic young Irishman whose political activities in the Emerald Isle (in these days, I fancy, he would be classed as a Sinn Feiner) resulted in his departure for America. That was in 1796. He set up as a seedsman and nurseryman in Philadelphia, with a garden in the suburbs and a store on Second Street, below Market. This little shop, fragrant with the mingled aromas of dried seeds, garden implements fresh from the factory, and many a

novelty of plant culture, developed by and by into a famous resort for plant-lovers. Here for half a generation the foremost American botanists of the time — men like Thomas Nuttall (the author, by the way, of the name Mahonia), Dr. Darlington, of Flora Cestrica fame, and Dr. Darlington's cherished friend William Baldwin, eminent for his Southern collections — would foregather to lounge away a pleasant hour discussing with M'Mahon the latest news of the world of plants, with a fling, now and then, we may guess, at a certain tight little island oversea — for the War of 1812 brewed and broke during the life of the M'Mahon shop. Tradition has it that it was under M'Mahon's roof that the Lewis and Clark expedition to Oregon was planned; which, if true, makes the bestowal of his name upon these Pacific coast evergreens particularly apropos.[1] "How far that little candle throws his beams!" Strange that that modest vanished shrine to Flora should be potent after a century and a quarter and at three-thousand-mile range to stir my thought upon a wild southwestern mountain.

By and by our apology for a road came out upon a grassy flat dotted with tangled masses of chaparral, through whose intricacies we wound, thrashed by pendent branches and pricked by cactus and yucca, to the top of a small cañon breaking abruptly down-

[1] M'Mahon was the author of the *American Gardener's Calendar*, published in 1806, and long a standard work in its line. The eleventh edition (1857) contains some pleasant reminiscences of this genial Irishman and his amiable, quick-witted wife. A quotation from it may be found in Bailey's *New Cyclopedia of Horticulture*, art. "M'Mahon."

ward toward the desert. The sun was approaching its setting, and the shadow of our mountain, cool and purple, was creeping out upon the hot sands. In the distance the Salton Sea flashed like a golden platter.

Antonio stopped the team and got down from his seat, remarking laconically, "*No mas;* no can go; we walk."

Then, unharnessing the horses and piling upon them our blankets and stock of provisions, he led them in single file down a trail that disappeared in the cañon's depths. After a sharp descent of half a mile through thorny chaparral, we emerged in an enchanting little nook for a camp — a sort of dimple in the treeless mountain-side with a rush-bordered spring, feed for the horses, no end of dry wood, and for a roof the blue dome of heaven. The mescal fields, Antonio informed us, were just ahead; they would engage us on the morrow; meantime we would hobble the horses and turn them loose, set the beans cooking, and, disposing our other eatables in the branches of the shrubbery with such cunning as we could command to outwit mice and coyotes, prepare our camp for a three days' stay.

It was an inhospitable landscape that Antonio next morning led the way to, provided with a shovel, an axe, and a couple of gunnysacks — an arid, desolate, undulating slope, at an elevation of three thousand feet or so, cluttered for miles with masses of rock, big and little, lying loose over the gravelly ground or heaped up in natural cairns. Mingled with the rocks was a sparse but varied vegetation

characteristically desert — yucca, agave, cactus, ocotillo, ephedra, zizyphus, eriogonum, krameria, cat's-claw, atriplex — as irritable, prickly, and crabbed a floral brood as you would be likely to find anywhere in a summer's day travel. "*Mucho mal hombre*" — very bad man — Antonio pronounced them in his placid fashion, as he picked his way gingerly through them. Yet with it all there was much of exquisite beauty — the pink blossoms of the small, spineless, gray opuntias, the crimson rose-like flowers of Engelmann's cereus, the pale yellow circlets of bloom upon the bisnaga's crown, the fiery spikes of the ocotillo, and the golden suns of the encelias. Most endearing were the tiny plantlets of the cactus tribe — the baby bisnagas in pink, the mamillarias in gray, the opuntias in soft green — all innocuously charming in spite of the embryo savage within them, just as tiger kittens and wolf pups share in the universal gentleness of infant life.

Antonio came to a halt in a sandy hollow where some bits of charcoal and a few fire-blacked stones lay about, and laid down his shovel; for here was the site of an old mescal pit, and it was the Indian custom to use the same pits year after year for their baking. Then, with the axe and a sack on his shoulder, he began looking over the hillside for budding mescal plants. When he found one, he cut out the bud with his axe, sliced off the tip, which he discarded, and put the butt in his sack.[1] A suitable

[1] In old times the Indians used for severing the bud a pole of oak or mountain mahogany, about five feet long, with one end beveled like a chisel. With this the bud was very neatly lifted out of its bristling cradle.

number harvested, he returned to the spot where he had left the shovel, and proceeded to dig out one of the old pits to a depth of a couple of feet and a diameter of a yard or more. This he lined with flat stones both sides and bottom, and laid the mescal butts in a circle around the rim of the pit. Next he brought several armfuls of dead brush, being careful, as he informed us, to avoid shrubs with a bitterness in their wood, and with these he made a roaring bonfire in the pit. When the falling ashes and embers had made a substantial bed, he pushed the mescal butts upon it. The fire was kept burning by the addition of dead mescal stalks — "make more strong heat for bake" was Antonio's explanation of this proceeding — until the pieces of mescal were well buried in the hot ashes, and the stones of the lining heated through. The hole was then covered with earth heaped up into a mound so as to exclude the air.

Antonio wiped his sweaty, grimy face with a red bandanna and smiled upon us through a ring of soot.

"*Bueno*," he observed. "To-morrow when the sun gets there" — pointing to the zenith — "we come again and eat him."

Thirty hours later, when we opened the pit, it was still hot and fragrant as a molasses barrel from the steaming mescal butts, which Antonio deftly tossed out of the ashes with the tip of his shovel. My heart sank at the sight of the blackened chunks, for they seemed hopelessly overdone — burnt to a crisp, in fact. This, however, proved to be but a surface condition. Paring away the charred outside

of one of the pieces, I found the heart to be a tender, sticky, brownish mass, quite sweet, and of a flavor suggesting warm pineapple. Mr. Charles F. Lummis, I think it is, has described mescal as resembling jute and molasses, but I fancy his experience must have been with older buds than ours that day, for the jutey element was not noticeable. Warm, it is said to be less digestible than cold. In either state Indians are extravagantly fond of it, and I doubt if the sackful which Antonio carried back with him to share with his family and *parientes* lasted over one sitting.

That night by our camp-fire Antonio was in a most communicative humor. The spirit of the ancients appeared to be upon him, and it pleased him to recall the traditions of his people. Under this spell, his English, bizarre at the best, became nothing short of atrocious; but I managed to gather a few picturesque items which I pass on. There was, for instance, the case of Yopú, a mythical hero of the Diegueños, described by Antonio with some minuteness, but the details I now forget. Yopú's strong point was a connoisseurship in mescal, including a sure knowledge of the whereabouts of the best; for it seems there are four kinds of mescal from the culinary standpoint, the best having big fat leaves and a green stalk. Some stalks are purple and are less good; and in old times certain localities were famous above others for the excellent flavor of their mescal plants. All these things Yopú knew and indulgently made known to the people. His original home, it seems, was in a deep, rocky cañon off Bor-

rego Valley; not far, if I understood Antonio aright, from the Bad Place of Yellow Clay, where a devil lived who specialized in stealing boys and girls at night. Whether this uncomfortable sort of neighbor affected the spirits of the kindly Yopú I failed to learn; but, at any rate, he went later to live in a mountain near Vallecito, where water was and carrizo. Whither he went after that nobody knew, least of all Antonio; and if he died, it was no more than others did.

More dramatic we found Antonio's narration of how the Pleiades came into the sky. When the world was young, so the old people say, and humanity was new to it, it was noticed that after a while people began to die; sometimes it was a man and sometimes it was a woman; now it was a coyote, and now an eagle; for in those days the animals and people lived together in friendliness and spoke one language. This mystery of death was very disturbing, for nobody could say whose turn would come next, and nobody wanted to die. So they held a council to talk the matter over; and it was decided that the best thing to do was to make a clean job of it by quitting the earth altogether — for it was evidently bewitched — and go up into the sky. Now, among those at the council was Cabrilla, the Turkey Buzzard, who had seven daughters. Well, the first spread her wings and, mounting higher and higher, growing smaller and smaller as the rest watched, she at last reached the sky and turned into a star. Then to make the ascent easier for the others, she let down a rope which they caught and

were pulled up one at a time, each as she arrived being metamorphosed, like the first, into a star. Now the seventh daughter had a lover whom she did not care a straw for, in fact disliked, and who was none other than Señor Coyote. He, of course, was mightily distressed at seeing his inamorata, when her turn came, swing clear of earth and rise skyward. So what does he do, dressed all in his best, but make a spring and catch hold of an end of the rope that dangled in the air, and up he went, too. But no sooner did his sweetheart land among the stars than she cruelly cut the rope, setting poor Coyote adrift in space, when he also was turned instanter into a star. And, if you will look up at the Pleiades any night, you will see close in the wake of that sparkling sisterhood of seven, one following star which our astronomers call Aldebaran, but which, as Antonio could testify on the word of his grandfather who had it in turn from his, is Coyote the discarded lover, awaking every night to fresh hope and a quest that never ends.

The fall of a brilliant meteor with a train of sparkles gave Antonio a new text.

"Chowk!" he exclaimed.

"Chowk?" I repeated. "What is chowk?".

"Him *mucho mal hombre*," he replied, throwing fresh fuel on the fire and drawing close to it. "Much bad man, and eats people up. Long time ago he come out of the east, mebbe Arizona — *quien sabe? Mucho mal hombre*, Chowk."

With that he entered with relish into certain gruesome details of the life and habits of this disagree-

able demon, whose influence in the lives of the Southern California Indians is quite considerable. He is known under different names by different tribes. Among the Cahuillas of the San Jacinto Mountain he is Tahquitz, a name which has been taken hold of by geographers and been applied in that region to a peak, a valley, a creek, and a cañon. In the bowels of San Jacinto this evil genius is believed to have his dwelling; and when the mountain rumbles and trembles, as it does at times, it is as plain as the nose on your face that it is Tahquitz stirring in displeasure. His taste for gracing his dinner-table with morsels of humanity was — and indeed still is — a source of terror to the Indians, few of whom will trust themselves alone at night in the neighborhood of his supposed den.

According to Antonio he was much more of a scourge in old times than now, for this reason: Once upon a time, very long ago, the people all assembled in council to consider ways and means to destroy Chowk, and a certain old "witch-man," learned in the ways of devils, was delegated to do the business. He secured an interview with Chowk and said to him: "I can take you apart and show you the pieces you are made of." This interested the demon intensely, but, said he, with admirable caution, "Can you put me together again?" The "witch-man" assured him this would, of course, be part of the agreement; whereupon Chowk yielded to his curiosity and submitted to dismemberment, and the wily "witch-man," who had no idea of reassembling the parts, distributed them far and wide over the

land — his lungs here, his stomach there, his head elsewhere, while his heart the people fell upon and probably ate. Antonio was uncertain upon that point; but, as to the liver, that he knew was turned into a black rock and lies to this day near Elsinore, where anybody not blind can see it — but do not, as you value your life, put tongue to it, for it is poison.

After giving us time to digest this historic tidbit, Antonio lighted a fresh cigarette and proceeded to tell how, though Chowk's body was thus effectually disposed of, the "witch-man" was impotent over the demon's spirit. So as a spirit he escaped to the heart of the San Jacinto, where he still lives in company with his old grandmother; and the place of their abiding was called Ah-wik-kai-yai, and still is to this day; for Indian people hold fast to old names, quoth Antonio, "so everybody know, sabe?" Now this grandmother is toothless and, requiring soft food, has developed a Saturnian appetite for babies. When, therefore, she is keen for a meal, what does this dutiful demon of a son do but launch forth upon the sky as a meteoric star, and any unfortunate infant whom he finds exposed in the night is caught up by him and carried to one of those pot-holes common in the rocky beds of mountain streams. There with a gold pestle he mills the innocent to a pulp, in which jelly-like condition the horrid old hag mumbles it down as easily as scraped apple. Whence the Diegueños call such pot-holes by a name that means "Chowk's mortars." And so, when you see on a clear, still night, as you sometimes will, a particu-

larly bright falling star shoot down the sky, like another Lucifer cast headlong out of heaven, you may be sure it is Chowk hunting; and you had better blow out the light and hold the baby well hid in a blanket.

IN THE SAN BERNARDINOS

I am starved for men and women;
I want to go where the crowd is thickest. . . .
Warming the hands and heart of my soul at the blazing hearth
of the people.

JAMES OPPENHEIM, in *Folk Hunger*

FOLLOWING THE CROWD ALONG THE RIM OF THE WORLD

IT sounds rather grandiloquent — that phrase "The Rim of the World" — but we may well pardon the Californian some exuberance of fancy when he comes to naming a mountain drive that is among the finest in his State. And it is one that he certainly uses. From the first of May, when the trout season opens, until mud and snow block the higher passes (which may be in November), there is a constant tide of travel along the crest of the San Bernardino mountain-range. By far the most of it is by automobile, though some is ahorseback, some of it afoot with pack-burro accompaniment, a little by horse and wagon. No outing in Southern California is more cherished than this. The San Bernardino Sierra, you will remember, is the one you cross when arriving in Southern California by either the Santa Fé or the Southern Pacific Sunset Route. On the one side lies the desert, on the other the land of the orange, the olive, and the rose. The range has a general elevation of some six thousand feet, with numerous peaks rising a couple of thousand feet higher, and two that reach to about eleven thousand. Like all Southern California mountains the lower elevations are furred with the shaggy, perennial green of chaparral; but the cañons and upper altitudes carry a more or less heavy growth of the fine conifers that flourish so heartily on the Pacific coast

— huge sugar, yellow and Jeffrey pines, white fir, big-cone spruce, incense cedar, and, of especial noteworthiness, knob-cone pine, of which a belt nearly half a mile wide of low-growing specimens (some mere pygmies of five feet) occupies a part of the southern slope between City and East Twin Creeks, the only place in Southern California where this interesting pine is known to be indigenous.[1] Mingled with the coniferous trees are beautiful old Kellogg oaks, gnarled and weather-beaten veterans of centuries of storm and sun. Much of this timber is as yet undisturbed by lumbermen, and as the region, with the exception of a few privately owned tracts, has now passed into the Angeles National Forest, the likelihood of devastation by the axe has been removed. It is, in the main, a sunny, open forest, where icy springs well up to form cascading brooks that set out happily through thicket of fern, some toward the desert, some toward the fruitful plain of San Bernardino. Among the manifold charms of this noble forest are frequent natural meadows and moist *ciénagas*, upon whose green stage the wild flowers hold a succession of colorful pageants from early spring till late autumn — blue wild iris and pink wild rose, shooting stars and scarlet penstemons, monkey flowers in palest buff and vivid yel-

[1] *Pinus tuberculata*, remarkable for its tight-fisted cones, which open only under the influence of fire or when the tree is killed. The cones are borne in clusters close around the main stem and branches, and may persist unopened for twenty or thirty years. On old trees they are sometimes found almost if not quite buried in the enveloping bark. A number of young trees are to be found on the southern slope of the Sierra Madre near Pasadena, but these are of recent Forest Service planting.

A WILD-FLOWERY MEADOW OF THE FOOTHILLS

low, flaming castilleias and brown heleniums, and the pale panicles of veratrum. At the water's edge lilies, thimbleberry, wild pea, columbine, and lupines play Narcissus as in the youth of the world; and on many a shadowy slope beneath the pines crimson snow-plants break the mould. Down leafy alleys of the wood, dappled with sunlight and cheery with bird notes, your eye is led to distant view, now of valley, now of desert, but always far below. Yourself, you walk elate, as was said of one of old, "ready to strike the stars."

They may tell you that the entire round of one hundred and one miles or so from San Bernardino to San Bernardino again can be done with ease between breakfast and six o'clock dinner. So it can, but don't you do it. Rather take a leisurely two or three days to it, if you can afford the time; loafing along, stopping as the mood impels you, and take to your heart the good cheer of the mountains. You need carry nothing with you but your pocketbook, for there are good camps by the way for the entertainment of man and car, and gasoline stations aplenty; but if you prefer you may stow your blankets and "chuck" in the machine, and camp where night overtakes you, the guest of Uncle Sam at his Sign of the Beautiful Star. Many, very many, do that; but let the blankets be ample, for, however hot the midday, those highland nights are cold, often frosty, even in midsummer.

It was half-past six when we left San Bernardino behind us and struck across the broad plain toward the mountains, a fine breezy morning after an all-

night wind that had swept from the sky into uttermost limbo every cloud and shred of mist. The sierra stood out before us clear-cut as a cameo in purple with dimples in black, the famous landmark of the Arrowhead in plain relief. Dear to the heart of all San Bernardinans is this natural phenomenon of a colossal arrow-point impressed upon the mountain-side, and sorely has it taxed the local chroniclers and legend-makers to account for its presence there. None of their attempts that have come to my knowledge are convincing, though the story of the two Mexicans, Juan and Pedro, playing cards for a horse and saddle when a gust of wind caught Juan's winning trump, the ace of spades, out of his excited hand and maliciously fixed it up there beyond redemption, possesses a certain humor that causes it to linger in the memory. To the cool mind of science the Arrowhead is simply a case of peculiarity of soil, which differentiates the vegetation it bears from that prevailing all around it. That the space should take on the form of an arrowhead is merely a curious accident; it might have been a crescent or a cross; only it was not. Beneath it on the mountain's flank was an old-time resort known as "Arrowhead Hot Springs," where you might wash down a chill lunch with draughts of hot water steaming from the rock.

But our way was not thereby that morning, and leaving the Arrowhead to our right we turned up Waterman Cañon, and for two miles at an easy grade followed along a bouldery mountain stream under the occasional shade of oaks, bays, alders, and

sycamores. On the banks above us the bees droned in the wild buckwheat, and the calls of quail and meadowlark came blithely down the air. Then at a sign marked "Mormon Trail" — the entrance to an old road used by the Mormon founders of San Bernardino for the ascent and descent of the mountain nearly three quarters of a century ago — we found ourselves facing the abrupt wall of the sierra, and the "switchbacks" began. These are the zigzags of the road cut like an inclined shelf that bends back and forth over itself as it rises, accomplishing a lift of about two thousand feet in three miles. The grade runs usually from twelve to thirteen per cent, but occasionally rises above twenty, and the wise driver does it at five miles an hour, cooling his engine at every water plug. It is an exhilarating climb with ever-widening outlooks. At a mile above sea level the crest of the range is attained. Here you are in a world of pine and oak. To the northward are glimpses of the Mojave Desert; to the west, through a filter of tree-tops, the snowy summit of San Antonio shows white against the blue; below you, to the south, the purple foothills float, islanded in mist, and in the plain beyond is Redlands dimly seen among its orange groves. And now for forty miles your way will be along the mountain's crest eastwardly, winding and doubling on itself, rising and dipping and rising again — a road you cannot lose unless you insist upon turning into the byroad that leads in three or four miles to Arrowhead Lake, the Little Bear of other days, which is quite worth seeing; and then all there is to

the matter is to turn around and drive back to the main road, the richer by the memory of a pretty sheet of water ringed about by pines and summer camps.

If your enjoyment of the drive depends upon a good roadway, then the Crest Road will disappoint you unless it has improved since we traveled it; for it is just a dirt road, often too narrow for two machines to pass, and as the summer progresses it cuts up badly in places and becomes very dusty. For much of the way it is hardly possible to make a higher average than twelve or fifteen miles an hour should you want to. This is a blessing, however, for this temperate pace enables you to look around as you go; to note, for instance, the exquisite shadows of the great pines and to study the noble trees themselves, their trunks three and four feet through and rising a hundred feet into the air. There is food for thought in a tree-trunk. How impassive it is in a restless universe, unmoved either by whip of storm or caress of sun, intent only to keep safe beneath its armor of bark the fresh currents of life ascending and descending between root and crown — type of the steadfast guardian! I think it is the Misteca Indians of southern Mexico who regard themselves as descended from tree-trunks, and call themselves by a name that means "sons of the tree-trunks." If I had to renounce my Adamic progenitor, I believe I would prefer the Misteca theory to the Darwinian.

We liked to linger at points that jutted out over the valleys and bare our heads to the cool breeze from the Pacific. At such a spot we ran the car upon

the brown carpet of pine needles, and, as we ate our luncheon amidst the bracken, we watched the tide of travel flowing by. All sorts of automobiles, of course, some out just for the day, and others piled high with camping outfits, fishing-rods and creels, baby carriages, the family cat on a string, and the family dog asquat on the running-board. Here, trailing clouds of dust, come a couple of machine loads of those modern Thespians of the open air, the motion-picture actors — for this region serves admirably for various settings; and later we saw this company staging a Tennessee mountain drama on a spot that the winter before had done for an Alaska piece. In their wake a desert prospector, in a light trap drawn by a span of burros, jogs along in company with a desert rancher in his lumbering wagon, bringing his sunburnt family to camp out under the pines and cool their Mojave-heated blood beside musical waters distilled from the snow. Later we passed a merry squad of ex-school boys and girls footing it in elkskins and leggins, some with their belongings on pack-animals, others with theirs in knapsacks. Then there were *vaqueros* in "chaps" and jingling spurs, their loose-knotted bandannas fluttering in the breeze; picnicking ladies from some mountain camp, sweaters dangling from their waists and wild flowers filling their hands; auto-trucks laden with supplies for the resorts, and dusty auto-stages from San Bernardino, Redlands, or Los Angeles, filled with tourists only less dusty — it is as picturesque in a twentieth-century way as the Canterbury Pilgrims.

The "resorts," as the camps for public entertainment are called, are a permanent feature of interest along the road — often real, little villages of log cabins clustered about a central building that houses offices, kitchen, dining-room, and dancing-hall. Here Saturday nights are festive occasions. There is dancing and ice-cream and soda-pop, and, besides the usual gathering of guests in various styles of négligée, there is frequently a more or less picturesque sprinkling of mountain and desert folk, forest rangers, homesteaders, and so on. Dancing-shoes have sometimes been forgotten on these occasions, I fancy, else why that placard which I once saw conspicuously posted at a place of this sort, "Hobnails not allowed on this floor"? Such resorts also maintain furnished tents and cabins to rent [1] to those who prefer doing their own housekeeping, and a grocery store is conducted to meet the needs of such. Do not, however, mistake for a public resort "Squirrel Inn," the sign of which attracted our interested attention a few miles along after reaching the crest road, for you will find it as difficult to secure lodging there as it was at that more famous "Squirrel Inn" of Mr. Stockton's whimsical romance. It is, in fact, the private estate of an association of city people who enjoy now and then an outing in their own company and in surroundings under their own control. The name was, I believe, inspired by the Stockton story. We found it worth

[1] The rates vary with the place and season. At the present time, $10 to $12 a week for two persons in a furnished tent and $15 to $20 for two persons in a furnished cabin, will serve as a quotation.

our while to stop for a moment and walk to the little summer-house at the mountain's edge for the superb view across the sugar-pine tops and down the chaparral-clad cañons to the valley that stretches limitlessly away. Under clear weather conditions the twin peaks of Santa Catalina, seventy-five miles distant, may be distinguished rising in the Pacific Ocean.

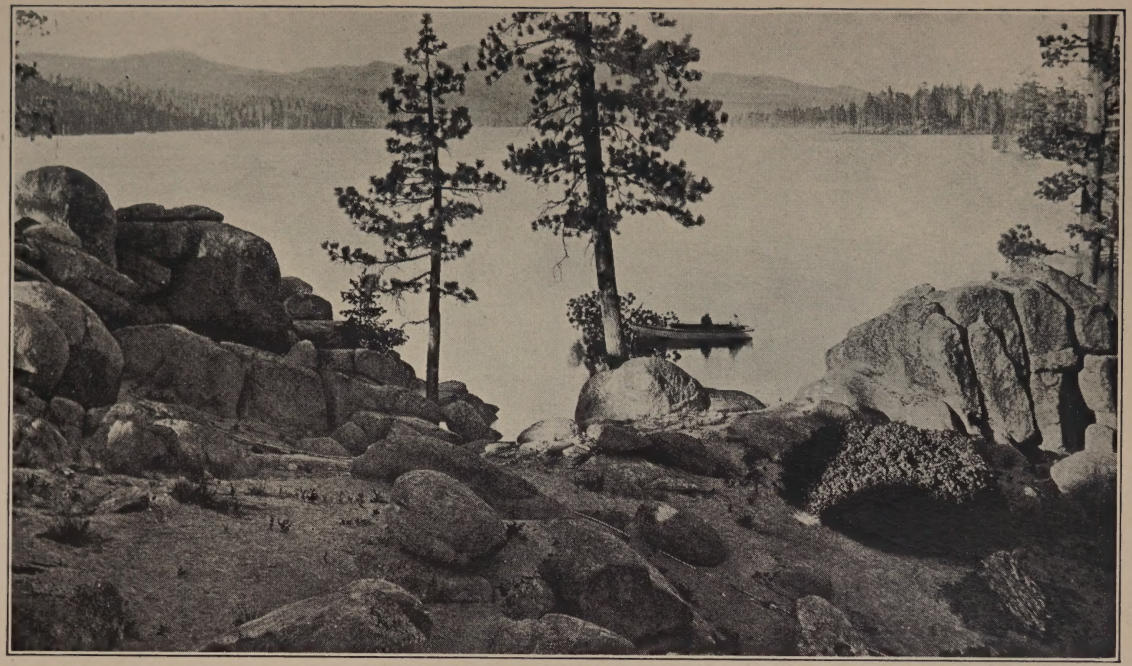
Ten miles beyond Squirrel Inn disappointment awaited us. The fine woodland suddenly ended, and we drove for a dozen miles along the bed of an abandoned logging road, past Fredalba and through the rocky gorge of Deep Creek, beloved of anglers. The long, poetic views that had been charming us were now absent; on every hand our vision was limited by rather monotonous, barren ridges rising above valleys and slopes stripped years before by the lumbermen. Our hearts sank and we began to grumble: "Rim of the World, forsooth; the trough of it rather. Why, anyhow, did we believe this fool California brag and come on such a trip?" Yet, looking more attentively, we saw that, though the hillsides had been cut over, they possessed none the less a beauty that grew upon us — the heartening presence of lusty young pines and firs, lifting aspiring tips skyward and proceeding with the business of life as briskly and freshly as normal youth ever does — the blessed spirit of hope springing from adversity, the joy of fresh adventure, the very spirit of the West. It was an object lesson in Nature's healing ways; and after an hour of it we ran into Green Valley, and the best of all was to follow — bigger timber, untouched by fire or axe, more glorious

views, and a better road which wound by devious and always pleasant ways up a long climb to the rim of Big Bear Valley. It was a climb of many short turns and dizzy drop-offs at the edge, and somewhere along it we picked up a bareheaded young fellow with his coat upon his arm. He proved to be an ex-auto-stage driver, and had we been of a nervous sort we could have wished him at Jericho with heartiness, for he did nothing but talk of the perils of the road. "There," said he, "see that break in the bank? Well, a guy who could n't back tried to turn round about there and went over. Hurt? Sure, but I guess he did n't die; I never heard that he did." A little farther on, we were treated to this: "Now that's kind of a bad place we're just coming to — two weeks ago when I was driving the bus, I seen a car go over there — three old ladies in it eating their lunch. Well, sir, that car turned over three times — I counted — but the old girls sat tight and stayed with it, and as luck would have it the car stopped right side up. Nobody hurt — except one old dame had her specs bent up quite a bit. And, of course, the lunch got lost." Then there was this gem: "Another bad place — you passed it just before you picked me up — they was a Ford jumped the track with a woman and a baby in it and landed a hundred and fifty feet below. Shook the lady up a bit, you bet you, but the baby liked it, set up as chipper as a jaybird chirpin' for more. The driver got his, though. But mostly it's only the car gets hurt in these accidents. You're a sight safer drivin' up here than in L. A., believe *me*."

From the rim down there is a gradual drop to a thousand feet lower, and you arrive at what for most people is the gem of the trip — Big Bear Lake, sixty-seven hundred feet above the sea, its shores occupied by the most populous mountain resort in Southern California. Here are more than a score of hotels and camps, a comprehensive assortment of shops catering to the needs and whims of a more or less luxury-loving clientèle of vacationists, a motion-picture theater, a lumber-yard or two, real-estate dealers' offices, a newspaper, a sawmill, and a scattering town of log cabins fringing the lakeside and nestling under great pines — the holiday residences of hundreds of families from the valley cities and ranches. The Forest Service tries to keep a record of the visitors between the first of June and the last of September, and a year ago they footed up about fifty thousand over one road alone of the three leading into the Lake. People who remember the lovely seclusion of the little highland valley as it was a score of years ago, wild-flowery and grassy, holding in its heart a small lake dwindling with the progress of the summer, and visited only by occasional old-fashioned campers of the horse-and-wagon type, lament the present atmosphere born of noise and crowds. This, however, is what comes of accessibility by automobile — an influx of a class who are less concerned with what they may find in Nature than to set up in Nature's holy places the city's banalities. Yet not all are of this sort. At intervals, through the woods and away from the blare of the gramophones, we came upon quiet campers, singly

or in communities, beside their parked and sheeted cars. It was pleasant to hear their jolly banter called from camp to camp, and their snatches of song as, bucket and towel in hand, they sauntered down to the lakeside for a scrub. The lake, which is one of the loveliest sheets of water in California, was created by damming the outlet of the valley, into which many streams drain. This fact of artificiality, for reasons which I leave to philosophers to explain, is a defect in the view of some natures and detracts from their pleasure in the pure beauty of this upland mere in its green forest setting. The waters are stocked with salmon trout, and if you are of an angling mind you may either hire a rowboat — or one fitted with a motor attachment — and troll the lake, or take a hint from the "salmon eggers" and "helgamiters" and fish from shore. In the latter part of the year, after cold weather has driven most campers down to their homes, ducks of several kinds — mallards, red-heads, and canvas-backs — darken the waters and afford sport to men of the gun, who at that season find the preferable way in with their cars to be via Victorville on the desert and the low pass by Baldwin Lake. But more important than these uses of sport is the value of the Big Bear water to the ranchers of the Redlands district — the real reason for the damming. Thither it is piped to become the life of thousands of citrus groves. It is an interesting instance of modernized alchemy, I think, this transmuting of the snows and rains of the mountain heights into golden globes of orange juice.

From Big Bear Lake the road turns southwest



BIG BEAR LAKE, SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS

and the home stretch begins. Five miles of gentle ascent through the same fine forest and we were on the valley's southern rim, eight thousand feet above the sea, and before us, far below, lay the cañon of the Santa Ana. Now the scene changed completely. From the twilight and peace of the ordered forest we emerged into a chaotic wilderness of glaring sunshine and colossal rocks, often strangely squared and piled one on another like remnants of some primeval masonry whose artificers were of titanic cast. Solitary pines, wind-pruned and tempest-blown, made here and there a stubborn stand against the persistent hammering of the west wind, and sprawling patches of chinquapin, manzanita, and wild lilac hugged the sterile white slope of the mountain. There was now no more forest. Our car coasted downward mile after mile on sunny, twisting grades like the "switchbacks" we had climbed above Arrowhead. Whirling around corners that promised to precipitate us into space, but never did, by and by we passed Clark's Ranch with its comfortable view of the higher peaks (snowy still in midsummer), and, crossing the hurrying waters of the Santa Ana, we climbed the divide into Mill Creek Cañon and so by boulevard across the plain to San Bernardino, a bath and dinner.

Throughout this chapter, I have been on the lookout for a suitable opportunity to tell you something about a certain plant that is a special feature of these San Bernardino Mountains, but travel by motor, whatever its advantages, has this disadvantage: it is impossible with satisfaction to study

plants from one at even fifteen or twenty miles an hour. Now that we are at the end of our journey and the car is stilled in its garage, let me say my say over our nuts and raisins. The plant in question is a dogwood. Your Easterner at first blush would be excused for regarding it as identical with the beloved little tree that sheets with drifted white the edges of his own woodlands in May. The large white petal-like bracts in clusters of four or six, surrounding a greenish-yellow button of closely compacted florets, shed brightness in the twilight of the forests which it haunts, in precisely the same way as does the dogwood of the Atlantic coast. And in the ageing year its foliage takes on the same livery of crimson and gold that its Eastern cousin affects in autumn. There are some differences between the two, however; for instance, the bracts of the Western tree are entire and gracefully pointed, while those of the Easterner, you will remember, are peculiarly notched, in a way almost amounting to an imperfection; so that botanically the Western tree is classed as a distinct species, *Cornus Nuttallii*, that is, Nuttall's Dogwood. While abundant northward, its occurrence in the south is rare except in the San Bernardino Range.

Now what is especially on my mind to write of is not so much the tree, which is showy enough to speak for itself, as of honest Thomas Nuttall whose name it bears. He was a character, who, although he visited California but once and as a bird of passage, left such an impress on the State's plant history that he deserves to be held in memory. Run

through a list of California flowers, shrubs, and trees named either by him or for him, and you will find it a surprisingly important one. His visit to California was in 1835, when California was still a Mexican province. We have contemporary testimony to the effect that he was a stout, stoop-shouldered bachelor, rather tall, with a bald head, and such a power of concentration that the onslaughts of swarming mosquitoes were powerless to disturb him from the study of a new plant or bird; for he was an ornithologist as well as botanist and the yellow-billed magpie, found only in the central valley of California, I believe, has its name, *Pica nuttallii*, in honor of him. If you are familiar with that classic of the Pacific, "Two Years Before the Mast," you may recall the author's mention of him poking barefoot about the neighborhood of San Diego in an old straw hat and rolled-up trousers. The sailors thought him rather cracked and dubbed him "Old Curious," and their low opinion of his sanity must have been confirmed when upon the voyage homeward he ingenuously asked to be set ashore for a few hours' quiet botanizing on an island off Cape Horn, while the ship was tossing and pitching her way around that tempestuous toe of the world — a request that provoked only a wrathful oath from the skipper.

A Yorkshireman by birth, Nuttall had emigrated to America while still in his twenties, and settled in Philadelphia. He developed a pronounced bent for the natural sciences, and, by living with extreme frugality and saving systematically out of his

winter's wages as a printer, he managed to secure freedom for long summer excursions in the rich wilderness of the Middle Atlantic States. Perhaps you will remember we met him in those days in that little shop of Barney M'Mahon's mentioned in a previous chapter. His reputation as a botanist became thus established, and in 1822 he was invited to Boston to become curator of the Botanical Garden of Harvard College, where he passed several years vegetating, to use his own expression, like his caged plants. Then one day — it was now 1833 — he was handed a bundle of dried plants collected by Nathaniel J. Wyeth during an overland journey to Oregon, and a desire to see the western coast of the continent took hold of him. Wyeth was shortly westbound again, and Nuttall, throwing up his Harvard job, cast in his lot with the expedition. It was a picturesque crowd of adventurers, and I wish we might see them in the fashions of the time — hunters, trappers, would-be farmers, missionaries, scientists a few, and, I fancy, a gambler or two. The leader Wyeth was a far-seeing Yankee, whose imagination had been fired by Lewis and Clark's achievements, and who had supreme faith in the commercial possibilities of the Far Northwest. The excessive hardships of two overland journeys, however, cooled his ardor, and, after his return from this second trip, he left the speculative West to other spirits and settled down to a safe and modest business in New England ice, which he shipped to the West Indies. His memory would have long ago melted from the annals of science, I guess, as com-

pletely as his ice, but for the fact that Nuttall dedicated to him the genus Wyethia, showy sunflower-like plants known from the Rockies to the Pacific and from Canada to Lower California.

But we were chatting of Nuttall. A few years after his return from California, a singular misfortune happened to him — he was bequeathed an inheritance! An uncle, dying, left him a farm near Liverpool, conditioned upon his spending at least nine months of each year in England. As far as concerned himself, Nuttall would have let the property go rather than leave his adopted country, rich as it was in happy opportunities to indulge his taste for Nature and her works; but he had sisters whose families he could benefit by this accession of pelf; so in the kindness of his heart he sacrificed his own desire and returned to England. He was acute enough, however, to realize that by bunching three months at the last of one year with another three months at the beginning of the next succeeding year, he could legitimately manage a biennial half-year's trip to his beloved America; and this became his practice. There is a touch of pathos in the manner of the death of this kindly, faithful lover of Flora. One day a case of plants came to him from Asia, and, in trembling eagerness to unpack these riches of Cathay, he overtaxed his frail powers, for he was now seventy-three and weakened by his earlier hardships and privations in the wilderness. Something snapped within him, and his spirit was suddenly gone. His gift of earthly flowers had turned to asphodel.

PASSES OF THE PIONEERS

Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the Ranges.
Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go.

KIPLING, *The Explorer*

I

FRÉMONT'S

A LITTLE to the right of the highway as you drive from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara, and just before you reach the tunnel that now pierces the Santa Susana sierra at the western edge of the San Fernando Valley, there is an abandoned wagon road which winds upward, rising with the mountain, crosses it, and then, descending steeply, joins the highway a half-mile or so west of the tunnel. A bronze tablet upon a stone monument at the eastern end of the road informs the curious that this way came General J. C. Frémont to the conquest of Los Angeles in 1847, and the gap at the crest of the range is still known as Frémont's Pass. It is a deep, narrow cleft between precipitous walls, a kind of miniature Thermopylæ, where, had it existed in its present form in the days of Mexico's dominion, another battle of "the hot gates" might have been staged, though perhaps with less profit to poets, for your Spanish-Californian seems to have been a long remove from the Spartan in his make-up. As a matter of fact, the Pass as we now see it is obviously an artificial cut to accommodate the road which has been graded to meet more exacting requirements of travel than obtained in 1847. And now it, too, has given way to further advance in highway-making. Abandoned utterly, its cracked asphaltum surfacing

is gradually going into hiding under weeds and sliding débris from the craggy hills that overhang it.

On a dusty shelf in a dark corner of our Public Library I came one day upon an old volume of the report of Lieutenant Williamson's surveying expedition of 1853, sent out to find a practicable pass for a railroad across the Southern California mountains. Thumbing it through and lingering over the sumptuous lithographs in color of primitive California scenery and the quaint woodcuts of pioneers in top hats sentimentally enjoying desert sunsets, I chanced upon a page describing the Frémont Pass as it was half a dozen years after Frémont's crossing, and when it was still, doubtless, much as the gallant Pathfinder left it. Williamson records it as the Pass of San Fernando, and found it hardly deserving of the name of pass at all, so steep it was, both ascending and descending. The south side — the one the Williamson party descended — was particularly difficult, footmen and men ahorseback taking it by long zigzags, while the wagons were only got down with the aid of ropes.

So I think we must imagine Frémont and his troopers not marching through the Pass of to-day, but clambering over what was a dip in the mountain's backbone. After all, we need not be finikin as to feet and inches in so large a matter. This general way the expedition undoubtedly came, bringing the Stars and Stripes with it; and, as we stand at the summit of the range whither a deep-worn trail above the old road leads us, it adds to our enjoyment of the fine prospect of the beautiful valley that opens below

us and stretches in green and gold to the misty Santa Monicas, to know that we are in the wake of History's car and of Old Romance. Within sight of where we stand Portolá [1] and his leather-jackets came marching a century and half ago on their famous quest of the lost Bay of Monterey; this very ground Serra's ragged sandals must have trod and retrod on evangelical business; and every other Franciscan padre, through half a century or more faring from mission to mission, here paused, we may imagine, to take breath and tighten his sagging girdle. And this way, too, rode the couriers of the Spanish viceroys bearing dispatches to and from Mexico, and the mission mail; and so was beaten out, little by little, by foot of man and hoof of horse, a link in *El Camino Real*, the King's Highway. After Frémont travel through the Pass took on various aspects — most notable, perhaps, the tide of emigrants from the south on their way to the northern gold diggings. Later on, and until the railroad came, the overland mail stages found their way over it, often with bandits at their heels. At one time or another all the notorious knights of the road, from Joaquin Murrieta to Vasquez and Senati, Moreno and Vulvia, must have made a lookout of the pinnacles of this pass, and hereabout purses and throats were habitually cut through many a troublous year. That Williamson report that I have quoted tells of the party's seeing Murrieta's autograph carved in

[1] Mr. Z. S. Eldredge, the scholarly author of *The March of Portolá* is inclined to bring him across the Santa Susanas, a few miles to the south of the San Fernando Pass, and into the Santa Clara Valley by way of Tapo Cañon.

the smooth bark of a great sycamore near the Pass, in a grove of "planes and evergreen oaks," a fine brook flowing by. In the trunks of other trees crosses were cut deeply, the work, doubtless, of Franciscan padres who appear to have been in the habit of breaking their journeys there for rest and devotion. Time has long since obliterated all those arboreal records and rusted the blades with which they were carved; but we may with reasonable certainty identify the spot — it was a customary camping-ground of the travelers of earlier years — and refresh ourselves under the very trees and from the same waters of Newhall Creek (a feeder of the little river Santa Clara) that ministered then and with a divine impartiality to the wants of priest and layman, Indian and *bandido*, alike.

At Saugus, three or four miles north of the village of Newhall, the highway to the desert sets in, offering the choice of four roads across the mountains. One of these traverses the San Francisquito Cañon — the cañon of the Little Saint Francis. The trail and subsequent road through this formed a link in the pioneer route between Los Angeles and the north, and later in the route of the overland mail stages. Another road threads the Soledad Cañon, which is the natural dividing line between the Sierra Madre and the mountains of Ventura. It is by this that the Southern Pacific's valley line crosses to the desert. Intermediate between them are Bouquet (formerly called Deadman's) Cañon, and Mint. This last is perhaps best described as a loop of the Soledad, and, as the road through it is a paved

boulevard, it gets most of the travel nowadays. The leisurely wayfarer, to whom the appeal of pure beauty and of the romance that veils humanity's past outweighs the thrill of speed, cannot afford to miss either the San Francisquito or the Soledad Cañon, which, except in winter, when storms have caused temporary flooding or washing-out of the roads, are handily enough taken by non-exacting automobiles. Within the limits of a summer day one may start from Los Angeles and without undue haste cross by one and return by the other.

In the San Francisquito some atmosphere of Mexican dominion still lingers, furnished by the presence of an occasional crumbling adobe with its well, vine-hung *ramada*, and *nopalero*, or cactus thicket, grown perhaps from San Fernando Mission cuttings and yielding annually a luscious crop of prickly pears; and there are the remains of an ancient stage station, if you know where to look for it. A cheerful little stream bears you company, winding back and forth across the road, its sandy, rubbly margin grown up with thickets of willow and guatamote. The Soledad is apparently the cañon leading to that pass which Williamson, scouting for transmontane railroad routes, came upon to his great surprise and named "New Pass." Down it from the desert he was able very easily to bring some of his wagons where wheels had never been before. It is a wild, weedy, sunlit cañada, kept continually moist in some parts by the underground spread of the Santa Clara River, which has its source here and goes its sparkling way down past Camulos, Ramona's

fabled home, to be merged at last with the Pacific. The road follows the bottom of the cañon, threading thickets of willow, guatamote, and sweet melilot, occasionally splashing across the limpid little river, and running in and out of tunnels of cool leafage formed by the overarching crowns of ancient cottonwoods, sycamores, and live-oaks. Altogether it is a leisurely, old-fashioned road, turning your thoughts to that former time when life, too, was leisurely and old-fashioned. In the late autumn it takes on a special grace, and glows with a mild radiance reflected from the golden leaves of poplar and sallow falling lazily through the air and strewing the ground.

By and by the desert appears before you — a hot, flat floor, in spots checkered with cultivation, but largely wild still, dotted with sage clumps and those grotesque arborescent yuccas that desert folk call "Joshuas." Here and there a pointed butte, crimson or black, sticks up from the plain, across which dust-twisters in attenuated funnels move briskly, whirling themselves into subsidence like dancing goblins at cock-crow. Far away the low line of the Tehachapi Mountains make a purple edging to a sky of turquoise. Near the foot of the grade descending from Soledad Pass into the desert, a dirt road abruptly turns eastward from the highway and skirts the northern base of the Sierra Madre. I find an agreeable historic interest in this road because it follows in a general way for some thirty miles the course of an ancient trail leading down to the Spanish Trail between Los Angeles and Santa Fé by way

of the Cajon Pass, in the days when California was still part of Mexico. In that interesting journal which Frémont has left of his travels in California in 1844, he speaks of his entrance into Southern California across the Tehachapi Mountains guided by a San Fernando Mission Indian who rode one day into their camp, sombrero on head and jingling spurs on heel. After the passage of the arm of the desert thrust up between the Tehachapis and the Sierra Madre's western prolongation, the Indian parted company with them at the base of the latter, pointing out to them this trail at the mountain's foot. "*No se pierde*," said he, "*va siempre*." (You cannot lose it, it goes forever.) One July day, not long ago, chance led me into the road I speak of, and my fancy was pleasantly touched to realize that barring an occasional plot of cultivation my eyes that day were greeted by much the same aspects as those the Pathfinder observed seventy-odd years before and recorded in his journal as he wrote it up by the light of his evening camp-fire. By the aid of that graphic narrative it was not hard to call up again the vanished trail and people it with Frémont's picturesque caravan, stretched out over the space of a quarter-mile, the scrub-clad mountain on the right, the arid, yucca-studded desert on the left — a strange rout of Americans, French, Germans, and Indians, talking four or five languages at once, sporting as many styles of equipment and dress, and marching in a sort of procession, with scouts ahead and on the flanks, and with front and rear guards, the pack-animals, baggage, and horned cattle in the

center. It took this unwieldy outfit three days to accomplish the skirting of the sierra and reach the Spanish Trail. Their two camp spots are easily identified — one where Big Rock Creek, a fine, trouty stream heading on the slopes of North Baldy and Islip, issues from a colonnade of alders into the desert; and the other, fifteen miles farther along, in the broad wash of what is now called Sheep Creek. Here I left Frémont to pursue his desert way, and turned into the cañon of the creek, thinking I was done with him. At the head of the cañon, however, I came upon a Frémontian reminder truly vivid — a hillside covered with little trees of the sort that California mountaineers call "slippery elm," but to which Science, wishing to honor the discoverer, has given the name of Frémontia. The trees were still in abundant bloom, and it was as if an innumerable company were encamped there in tents of cloth of gold. I like to think of them there looking down on the ancient trail and blooming every summer to the glory of Frémont; for I think his must, indeed, have been a kindly heart, to have given thought, in the midst of pioneering hardships and crowding political perplexities, to the flowers of the wayside.

II

THE CAJON

REGARDED in one way, the Cajon — *La Puerta del Cajon* of the Spanish-Californians — is less obviously a pass than a drop-off. This is assuming that you approach it from the desert as incomers from the east perforce must. The road from that direction has so little rise that it seems fairly level until imperceptibly you have come to a mountain rim and look unexpectedly down the precipitous farther side into the bed of Cajon Creek near a thousand feet below. Zigzagging into that as into a box (which, by the way, is what *cajon* is Spanish for, and a big box at that), you have a fair field to the plain of San Bernardino by way of the arroyo. It is a wild, lonely gap in the sierra's backbone, this Pass of Cajon, making a natural line of cleavage between the San Bernardino Range and the Sierra Madre.

This way has passed as in a pageant a succession of those actors who have made the history of California the picturesque drama that it is — Indians, missionaries, trappers and miners, pony expressmen, Spaniards and Mexicans and Anglo-Saxons, with a scattering of nearly every other nation under the sun; traders by caravan and conscienceless horse-thieves; miscellaneous adventurers afoot and ahorseback; immigrants by oxcart and prairie schooner, and, in

these latter days, by railway train and by motor-car. An Indian trail must have led across it, or not far from it, in very early times, for the diary of the first white man who passed this way notes the fact that the aborigines of the Mojave Desert were quite familiar with the route across the sierra to the sea, whither they would go periodically on pilgrimage for seashells and, I regret to say, to steal horses from the mission ranches.

That first white man, by the by, is entitled to more than passing mention, for he was one out of the ordinary. He may pass as the white discoverer of the Cajon gateway to Alta California. His name was Francisco Hermenegildo Garcés (there was really more of it, but thus much will suffice), an Aragonese friar of the Order of Saint Francis. Fired with apostolic zeal and the love of souls, red or white, he made his entrance into history in 1768 as missionary to the Indian population of what is now south-western Arizona. He was a sturdy, wide-awake young priest of thirty-odd, by no means of the stuff to doze about his mission chapel of San Xavier de Tucsón, droning masses to empty benches; and the record of his ten years' incumbency there includes such a round of parochial visiting as is quite astonishing. With no other weapon of defense than the armor of Christian love, and without other companions than an Indian guide or two, and with a mule to carry the necessaries for the mass, he would set off into the unknown with serene confidence and joyous in the belief that he was to be a bringer of light to those who sat in darkness. His simple faith

was pretty well embodied in a linen banner which he had made and carried upon his longest *entrada*. On one side was a painting of the Virgin and her Divine Child; on the other, a lost soul was depicted, burning in eternal fire. Thus might an honest padre, by appeal to the eye, expect to gather into the Gospel net the intended of Satan.

The travels of Padre Garcés, of which he has left circumstantial accounts in several diaries, ran into thousands of miles through a primitive wilderness, much of it never before visited by a white man, mostly desert or ruggedly mountainous, peopled, when inhabited at all, by isolated communities of Indians as wild as when they left the hand of their Creator. Enduring hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, he made the ground his bed, his only covering often his threadbare gray gown. His food was what his aboriginal hosts — or the austere desert — set before him; cactus fruits or meal of wild seeds, when nothing better offered. The Indians as a rule regarded him with benevolent interest and took kindly enough to his ministrations, though frankly puzzled by this enigma of a creature with a shaven face and a skirt reaching to the heels. Was it man or woman? The wonder was the greater that this being, who was obviously of the white race, notorious for its acquisitive and dominating ways, should require nothing of his red brethren but the privilege of showing them how to improve their lives in this present world and win everlasting felicity in the one to come. A rare being, indeed, and, moreover, a surprising hater of strife, setting himself to compose

quarrels between tribes and everywhere preaching the beauty of peaceable living.

Though his special charges were the Indians of the Gila Basin and the lower Colorado River, this wide-awake padre in his travels was bound by no such limits. Twice he penetrated to the Pacific coast of California, the first time with Anza's reconnoissance party of 1774, and two years later alone. It was this journey that brought him into the Cajon region. Traversing the arid waste of the Mojave Desert westward from the site of the present town of Needles, he was the first white man to see the Mojave River, encountering it apparently at the Soda Lake where it sinks out of sight forever about fifty miles northeast of the present-day Daggett. He named the stream Arroyo de los Mártires, and followed up its intermittent flow a hundred and fifty miles or so through the desert to its source waters in the San Bernardino Sierra. On March 22, 1776, Garcés effected the crossing of the sierra, passing, as he states, through a woodland of cottonwood, alder, oak, fir, and juniper, and getting at the crest of the range a view of the sea beyond the Santa Ana River and the plain of San Bernardino. Exactly where this crossing was is not clear from his diary.[1] The Cajon Pass has been generally assumed as the place, probably because travelers have for many years been coming in from the desert by that route; but the diary does not support this assumption. The entries

[1] Translated with voluminous notes by Dr. Elliott Coues under the title *On the Trail of a Spanish Pioneer* (New York, 1900) — a work no student of the history of our Southwest can afford to miss.

are explicit, day by day, as to direction and leagues traveled, and give ground for the belief that he came out at a point somewhat east of the Pass. His biographer Dr. Coues guesses he went through Bear or Holcomb Valley and so on down into the San Bernardino Valley by some one of several cañons traversed to-day by trails. It seems more likely that he kept up the west fork of the Mojave River through what is now the Burcham Ranch (some six miles from the Cajon), then over the ridge and down Devil Cañon, which enters Cajon Cañon near the mouth of the latter. This is a perfectly practicable route for a footman to-day and doubtless was in Garcés's day. So whatever the precise route of his crossing it could not have been many miles from Cajon Pass, which may properly enough take to itself somewhat of the interest that attaches to the travels of one of the most remarkable characters in the history of our Southwest.[1]

Fifty years after Garcés, in the late autumn of 1826, another man famous in the annals of the Southwest, but an adventurer in a very different

[1] Garcés met a martyr's death in the destruction by infuriated Yumas of the mission establishments on the Colorado River in the summer of 1781. He was secretly buried by a friendly Indian woman, and the account of the finding of his grave some months later by a party of soldiers, sent up from Mexico to recover the bodies of the massacred missionaries, has a touch that reminds one of "The Little Flowers of Saint Francis." Scanning the gray waste of the desert, the searchers' eyes were caught by the sight of a tiny spot of green, and proceeding towards it they found it to be a patch of grass mingled with blooming flowers, some known and some unknown. The soldiers were ordered to dig, and shortly uncovered the uncorrupted bodies of Garcés and his companion priest clad in their tunics and girdles. They were borne to Mexico and reinterred in the church at Tubutama, Sonora. See Fr. Engelhardt's *The Franciscans in Arizona.*

cause, crossed the San Bernardino Range presumably by the Cajon Pass. His name was Jedediah S. Smith, the first citizen of the United States to enter California overland, for up to that time the sea had been depended upon for communication with California. It was really a first-hand discovery on Smith's part, worthy of all honor, for he had probably never heard of Garcés and his travels. Smith, a Yankee by birth and a restless one, was a trapper and hunter operating in the vicinity of Great Salt Lake, a man of exceptional intelligence and, what strikes us as extraordinary in a man of his vocation in that wild time and region, "a very mild man and a Christian." [1] Hoping to extend his field for the collection of beaver pelts into the unexplored territory which lay to the southwest toward the Pacific Ocean, he set off into the unknown about the last of August, 1826, with fifteen companions and a string of horses. What he found, however, was not beaver, but Indians, jack-rabbits and strange cacti, thirst and hunger, and a fill of hardships. Half starved, ragged, and all but horseless, the party at last arrived among the Mojave Indians, near the spot where Needles now stands. Here they heard of the pleasant country west of the mountains, and obtaining two Indian guides they struck out for it, pursuing much the same route as Garcés had taken. It was late November when they came through the Pass. The autumn rains had turned the valleys and lomas to emerald, and the plains and arroyo bottoms were dotted with grazing horses, cattle, and

[1] *The Astley-Smith Explorations*, edited by Harrison C. Dale, 1918.

sheep. The meads of Paradise could not have been more alluring in the view of these exhausted travelers with the horror of the desert still fresh in mind. Halting at San Gabriel, they participated at the Mission in the hospitality accorded all wayfarers, in which wine, aguardiente, tea, cigars, fish, fowl, cheese, potatoes, and other kinds of sauce(!) are eloquently featured in the journal of the expedition. Do you wonder that the grateful chronicler credits Padre Sanchez, then in charge of the Mission, with being "a very fine man and very much of a gentleman"? The civil authorities of the province, however, were much less cordial, and regarded the presence of these uninvited heretics as highly suspicious; so that it was several months before officialdom set them at liberty to return to Salt Lake. This was by way of the San Joaquin Valley, the mountains being recrossed at some point not definitely known, but probably a little north of the Yosemite Valley, in late May, 1827.[1] So far as known, the Smith party were the first white men to cross the Sierra Nevada.

Smith as a pathfinder has been unduly neglected of historians. Those who have sympathetically studied his doings are inclined to place him in that group of American explorers of whom Lewis and Clark are the most distinguished. As they discovered the first overland route to the Pacific, Smith worked out the second — a more difficult

[1] The writers of the *History of California*, edited by Zoeth S. Eldredge, are convinced that he crossed by the pass north of Lassen's Peak.

feat, one would think, for it was largely through a trackless desert barren of game and scantily watered.[1] It is one of the ironies of fate that the name of Jedediah Smith, that very mild man and Christian, whose daring and perseverance made an important contribution to our empire's westward progress, is forgotten by all but an occasional student of history, while that of his graceless brother, Pegleg Smith, is a sort of household word in the Southwest. This Pegleg — whose given name was Thomas — was a familiar frontier character during the first half of the nineteenth century, following like his brother the business of hunter and trapper, to which, it is charged, he added horse-rustling as a side-line. A modest, quiet man when sober, he was a redoubtable hand at a shindy when the liquor was in. When his gun was emptied, he has been known to whip off the wooden leg to which he owed his sobriquet, and lay about him lustily to the discomfiture of many antagonists. The origin of the pegleg, by the way, is not without interest. An Indian shot Smith in the leg, shattering it badly, and making amputation a necessity. Smith undertook the job himself with his hunting-knife and a bullet mould, and made a success of it.[2] That strikes me as an achievement of no ordinary sort. It is not upon that, however, that his title to fame is founded, but rather upon his reputed discovery of a fabulously rich gold deposit never rediscovered; for the secret of its whereabouts, if it had any, was buried with Smith's pegleg. The story

[1] *The Astley-Smith Explorations.* Dale.
[2] *Autobiography of Isaac J. Wister,* vol. I, p. 46.

is one of the most popular of the numerous "Lost Mine" tales, and to this day is a continuing lure to prospectors and their credulous grubstakers.

But to return to our Pass. It was not long after Jedediah Smith's passage that the Cajon began to figure as a thoroughfare of commerce. The first trading party of importance entering California by this route appears to have been one headed by the Kentuckian William Wolfskill, a trapper, who settled in Los Angeles, and, finding citrus fruits more promising than beavers and otters, was the first to improve upon the old Mission type of orange. The pack-train he brought over the Pass in 1831 from Santa Fé was laden with New Mexican woolen blankets — *serapes* and *frasadas* in the vernacular of the region. These he exchanged for mules, which, on reaching Santa Fé, were so highly thought of that the custom was inaugurated of sending out a caravan of pack-animals every year with blankets to be bartered in Los Angeles for mules and horses, as well as for silks and other Oriental matters which were landed in California from China and thereaway. At least trading was the theory of the business. As a matter of fact, though, so far as live stock was concerned, stealing from the lonely ranges was a much shorter cut to acquisition; and these trading parties were often made up of unscrupulous half-caste frontiersmen — Mexican, French-Canadian, and what not — who not only rustled horses themselves, but encouraged the Indians to steal for them, too. Stampeding the herds on ranches of the interior valleys, these rogues would hurry their catch to the mountain passes, of which

the Cajon was a favorite, and once upon the desert there was small chance of getting them.

So came into being the so-called "Spanish Trail" through the Cajon. What a neighing and braying, what a thunder of hoofs and smother of dust must have filled the wild pass, when those long strings of driven animals came scrambling out of the defile upon the desert stretching illimitably! After a while, in the shelter of the traders' caravans, another sort of traders — parties of immigrants desirous of exchanging New Mexican skies for Californian — would come limping into the Pass and down the verdurous defile into the pleasant pastures of the San Bernardino plain. Then by and by, when the lure of gold brought all the money-mad world pell-mell to California, the Cajon got a considerable share of the Argonauts. And upon their heels, the Mormons. These people, then recently settled in Utah, had been casting about for a Pacific port of entry for their immigrant converts and their supplies, and decided upon San Pedro in Southern California. Their scheme included the setting-up of way stations for rest and repair at intervals along the eight hundred arduous miles that separated the port from Salt Lake; and so in 1851 San Bernardino came to be — a little Mormon town safely enclosed in a stockade. The road through the Cajon, so long known as the "Spanish Trail," was now the "Mormon Trail," and for nearly seven years was a part of the main artery by which power was fed into the State of Deseret. Incidentally the neighborhood of the Pass acquired an unenviable reputation as a lurking-place for out-

laws, renegade Indians, and "bad men" generally, who watched their opportunity to prey upon ranchers and immigrant parties. Another sort of robbery — by the time-honored methods of trade — was charged to thrifty San Bernardino Mormons, who would camp at the top of the Pass when inbound travelers were expected and sell them supplies at all the traffic would bear. Lieutenant Whipple, leading an exploring party through the Pass in 1854, makes specific complaint of one of these profiteering gentry whom he encountered there. "He professed to be one of the saints," writes the Lieutenant sourly, "but nevertheless charged most exorbitant prices for his sugar, flour, and coffee. He also smuggled in a keg of whiskey, but, as none of the men have money, it is likely to return untouched."

Mormon supremacy in the Pass — if supremacy be the right word — ended in 1857. In the closing days of that year a remarkable procession toiled through it — hundreds of dejected Latter-Day Saints from San Bernardino with bag and baggage, trekking back to Salt Lake, whither they had been called by the hierarchy. Mormonism was in open rebellion against the United States Government and needed all the faithful for the threatening conflict of arms, which, like many of our troubles, thank Heaven, did not happen after all. But San Pedro and Los Angeles continued to be vital to Salt Lake, and the Mormon wagon trains came and went through the Pass for many a long year, particularly in the season when snow in the Central Sierras and in the Rockies left other communication with the

outer world practically impossible. Moreover, all the intramontane basin was growing now, and every spring saw trains of canvas-covered freight wagons, drawn by mules or oxen, creaking through the Pass eastbound for mining camps and incipient cities as far away as Montana. Then one autumn morning of 1885 the walls of the Pass echoed to the whistle of a locomotive drawing the first Santa Fé passenger train through. It was the cock-crow of a new day, and the old times were gone.

What with the tracks of two transcontinental railways and an automobile highway, the Cajon to-day is the busiest of all the southern passes. Not long ago I camped one night at the summit, overlooking the basin of Cajon Creek — a wild, vast mountain theater whose sides sweep up to a rim of rounded peaks of which San Antonio's, bare and pink for half the year, is the most noteworthy. It is a treeless wilderness, still in general aspect what the pioneers looked down upon. Almost a pure stand of adenostoma covers the slopes with a close-knit mantle of dull green, through an occasional rent in which the bare, white earth shows in ragged blotches. Across this approach to the Pass the railway climbs, weaving a tortuous path, and we found something sprite-like in the play of light from the locomotives' reflectors in the night — now racing in thin, bright lines along the rails' edges, now suddenly flashing into brightness a whole dark mountain-side, to leave it in a twinkling blacker than before. The puff and pant of the laboring engines, echoed and reëchoed from

slope to slope, grew gradually to a roar as they ground along near where we lay, and passed away in a gradual diminuendo. How Sabbath-like the stillness that followed — how benignant the restored light of the stable stars, for a moment blotted out by the train's rude glare! One must have ears as impervious to noise as the ears of the Seven Sleepers to get much slumber out of a night in the Pass; but what the experience lacks in restfulness is compensated for by the sight of sunrise there. While the morning star still burns in the paling sky, the horizon desertward takes on an apricot glow, and turning your eyes westward you see Old Baldy's summit throwing off the dusky covers of the night for an aura of ashes of rose. For an ecstatic minute or two the whole range burns with a ghostly fire that flows daintily down the slope to be suddenly swallowed up in the white light of the risen sun. It is quick business and a breathless, leaving you with a feeling of having been in a heavenly presence.

By the automobile road through the Pass hundreds of machines go daily, many of them half hidden under dust and camp equipage. These are they who have accomplished the great adventure of a motor trip across the continent or are starting upon it. Mingled with them go the auto-trucks and jingling Fords of the near-by desert folk having business "inside" (as they call the coast side of the sierra), the wagons of old-fashioned Mexicans or Indians, and now and then a string of pack-burros from some desert mine. Even a man afoot is occasionally seen, but usually he is on the lookout for a lift from the

tender-hearted motorist. As we came down from that night under the stars, we picked up a lithe young fellow who looked expectantly into the car. He was bound for Michigan, he said, traveling in his shirt-sleeves, his visible luggage a packet of cigarettes, which he offered to me. "I hate to carry anything on a hike," he observed. "I mail my stuff on before and catch up with it when I need it. I don't want anything more in the daytime than I have on, and at night I make a fire and lay around it. Cold? Not for me. As for grub I work till I get a little stake ahead; it does n't take much to feed one. I came out for my health and got it, and it's taking me back."

If you want to put your toes in the real footway of the pioneers of the Pass, you must quit the present highway at Camp Cajon in the lower Pass where a monument marks the entrance to the Santa Fé and Salt Lake Trail. It leads up the narrow, rugged gorge of Coyote Creek — an affluent of Cajon Creek — and if you care to travel its six steep miles to Summit Valley and so along the desert's edge to the Mojave River, up which the caravans made their slow way, you will have the joy of a trip replete with beauty and the atmosphere of a picturesque past. As to picturesqueness, however, it did not go out with the ancients. There is a picturesque present, and you will find it pleasantly exemplified at this Camp Cajon which has just been mentioned. Here in a grove of willows a couple of hundred feet from the creek-side, the County of San Bernardino maintains an open-air caravansary without charge for the use of all travelers. In the grateful shade of this

CAMP CAJON, SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS, ON NATIONAL OLD TRAILS HIGHWAY

grove if it be summer, or in the equally grateful sunshine if it be winter, twenty-five or thirty tables of concrete are fixed, each with the necessary seats, also in concrete; stone fireplaces, ovens, and broilers are there, and for special jollifications a huge barbecue pit; a pump yields to the energetic the refreshment of cool, sweet water. There are, moreover, a post-office, a grocery store, a gasoline station, a checkerboard carved indelibly on one of the concrete table-tops and an Elks' clubhouse. What more can the reasonable wayfarer, who carries his own bed, ask?

If you are not in a hurry it will pay you to loiter here for an hour or two. Every few minutes a car rolls in from the desert — some with trailers, their contents snugly covered in with dusty tarpaulins; others loaded to capacity with rolls of luggage strapped to the sides, a shovel and an axe tucked under the ropes. Occasionally one carries a mattress debonairly on the roof; dogs clinging by their toes to the running-boards are a commonplace; cats, parrots, and caged canaries, less so, but occurring. A type of house-car is not infrequent, fitted up with gasoline stove and lamps, folding couch-beds, and shower bath. The thrifty proprietor of one such informed us he contemplated adding a small back porch to his, as there was room over the rear water-tank which it seemed a pity to waste! These house-cars have developed a new type of tramp — the hobo on wheels, he might be called, though he would probably resent the term, as he is of necessity a man of property, even though his cash does run low at

times and he has to pawn a blanket or a shotgun for a last charge of gasoline to carry him over the mountains.

"Me and the old lady here have been out over a year now," one of this sort remarked, as he smoked his pipe on a little doorstep let down from the upper works of the car, "and there's mighty little of the U.S.A. we have n't poked a nose into. You see, I owned a little ice-plant in Colorado Springs, and after the war the boy came home and was, of course, dead broke and had to get to work pretty *pronto*. So we talked it over, me and her, and we decided why not just turn the business over to him and we old folks'd hit the pike and see America first like. The boy pays us so much out of the earnings once in so often, and we just mosey along as it suits and take in the sights. It don't cost much. I'm a bit of a mechanic and there ain't no garage bills, and, of course, we snap our fingers at hotels and landlords. Grub for two is n't a killing matter; sometimes we could even afford to spend a little more. Once I'll never forget the old lady started in to feed us on lettuce, only lettuce, mind you, and me and Jim here" — patting the head of his dog — "we sighed for other days."

Cars from practically every State in the Union drop in at one time or another, from Maine to Florida and New York to Washington, even far-away Hawaii, and, of course, California continually. Californians are privileged to stay only twenty-four hours in the camp; to others the hospitality is without limit. They make an interesting company — an

assemblage of these newcomers from back East (as Californians call all America not of the Pacific Coast), lounging about this open-air wayside inn and fraternizing after a wash-up and a shave, swapping stories of their overland adventures and discussing prospects ahead in the land of their dreams, upon whose borders they at last stand.

"It's cost me twenty thousand dollars first and last, I figure, to reach California," I overheard one elderly man say, "but it just had to be. You see, neighbor, I started to come fourteen years ago; well, sir, I sold out on a bum market, so as to have everything in cash, and the things were sacrificed all of five thousand dollars. Right then family troubles occurred that kept us from getting started, after all; so I had to set up in business again; and one night blamed if the works did n't catch fire and burn up to the tune of fifteen thousand dollars, d'ye see, and there wa' n't no insurance, by gosh. So you see — well, we're here now, and are sure keen to see if it was worth the money."

III

THE PASS OF OUR LADY OF REFUGE

THE highway westward from Santa Barbara keeps the Pacific Ocean and the Channel Islands — Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa, and San Miguel — upon the left, and close upon the right the long line of the Santa Inés Mountains — *La Cuesta de Santa Inés* of the Spaniards — rising to twenty-five hundred or three thousand feet, their shaggy flanks transversely channeled with noticeable regularity every mile or so by shallow cañons and *cañadas* descending to the sea. In them are gathered, as sheep in their folds, most of the trees that grow natively on the mountain-side — comfortable, round-backed live-oaks and lolling sycamores corpulent of girth, in whose shadow an occasional living brook will linger through the dry season, though oftener the summer finds the arroyos dry as the broken cisterns of Tadmor. At the extreme west the brush-clad mountains dwindle into low, grassy, rounded lomas, jutting into the ocean at Point Conception, the Cape Horn of California as Dana called it because of its exasperating winds, which the sailors of his day averred began blowing at New Year's and were still at it on December 31st.

One of these *cañadas*, that of El Refugio, some twenty-five miles west of Santa Barbara, marks the edge of historic ground — the former Rancho Nues-

tra Señora del Refugio, stretching for twenty miles a narrow strip along the sea to the Cañada del Cojo and inland two or three miles to the crest of the sierra, its eastern limit marked by El Cerro de la Vigía, the Hill of the Lookout. For many years La Cañada del Refugio was the home of the Ortega family, whose founder in California was that sturdy old soldier and friend of the Padres, Captain José Francisco de Ortega, the right-hand man of Portolá on the expedition that resulted in the founding of San Diego and the planting of white civilization in Upper California. He accompanied Portolá on the famous march of 1769 from San Diego northward, and in all probability was the first of the party — and the first white man — to look upon the waters of San Francisco Bay. For nearly thirty years he took an active part, in charge of the military arm, in the settlement of California and the founding of the Missions, and it was fitting that in his old age he should be rewarded at least with that easiest of all gifts for the Spanish Crown to make in those days, a few square leagues of California land. Death intervened, however, to prevent Captain José Francisco's enjoyment of the estate, which was developed by one of his sons, Don José María, a man of character, too, and of distinguished bearing, they say. Under his management El Refugio not only waxed fat in cattle and grain, in oil and wine, but established such fame as a center of genteel smuggling operations as gives it a sure place in California history — and romance. Somewhat about this later.

Here where the road crosses the mouth of the *ca-*

ñada was the old Puerto del Mar, or place of landing from the sea, and it is probable that when Don José María built his home with its supplemental storehouses, ovens, vats, dependents' quarters, corrals, and what not, he set it somewhere near the entrance of the *cañada* facing the beach and the *Camino Real.* One can but conjecture as to the precise spot, however, because one December day of 1818 a vandal thing occurred. Into El Refugio's little roadstead two pirate ships came sailing commanded by the Argentine insurgent Hippolyte Bouchard, who ordered anchor cast, landed a force of men, killed live stock, and looted and burned generally in quite buccaneerish fashion. California in 1818 was still loyal to her Spanish motherland, and while in Old Régimist eyes Bouchard looked like a pirate, he called himself a Republican, and was doing his bit in the cause of Spanish-American independence, it would seem. With his appearance upon the California coast enters Joseph John Chapman, nicknamed Diablo Chapman, a Yankee by birth, who proceeded to cast in his lot with the *Californios* and played a picturesque rôle in the unfolding drama of the time. He was a sailor of the Bouchard company, who, when they made off at last, left him ashore. Tradition has it that he was lassoed by the ranch *vaqueros* as he landed with others of Bouchard's crew from a boat on the beach at El Refugio, held prisoner, and later was whisked off to Los Angeles on horseback held in his saddle by a strong-armed Californian riding by his side, for being a sailor and a Yankee it was insupposable that he could have known how to sit a

horse. Romance-proof historians will have none of this story, and assert that the lad deserted of his own accord from the Bouchard ships at Monterey, and that his appearance at El Refugio was after the piratical descent was over. Appear there he did, however, and made himself so much at home that he became a good Catholic — he had professed to be a Baptist — and got an Ortega daughter for a wife, the ceremony taking place at the Mission Santa Inés over the sierra. A clever jack-of-all-trades and a capable manager of Indians, he became a sort of handy man to the missionaries of the south, able on demand to build a grist-mill, plan a sailing vessel, or do a job of surgery, to say nothing of lesser undertakings. Padre Sanchez, of San Gabriel, who had him put up a grist-mill for that Mission (and, by the way, it still stands at the foot of Oak Knoll on the outskirts of Pasadena), marveled that "one so long in Baptist darkness could prove himself so good a Catholic as to be an example to older Christians."

I have qualified the smuggling operations at El Refugio as genteel. In fact, one might go farther and say that a certain odor of sanctity attended them. They were largely conducted, if we are to accept the conclusions of unbiased historians,[1] in the interest of the Mission Padres, who felt themselves driven to such import under the rose by a necessity to clothe their shivering neophytes — the sort of grim necessity which is held to make licit the illicit. It is not to be thought that the Padres were averse to

[1] For instance, Richman, in *California under Spain and Mexico*, chaps. x–xi, "The Problem of Sustenance."

paying Cæsar his tribute; their lament, rather, was that there were no imports to pay tribute on; for their Hispanic Cæsar absolutely prohibited the entry of goods in the ordinary ways of commerce, limiting transportation to the province to the irregular and inadequate service of an occasional Government boat from Mexico. It was a state of affairs that bred smugglers as naturally as old cheese breeds skippers. Yankee ships in quest of seal and otter skins were rather numerous on the Pacific coast at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and their captains, ever with an eye to trade, were not slow to cater to the situation. No spot on the coast lent itself more handily to the business than El Refugio, situated as it was directly upon the sea, remote from other settlement, and with two good passes — the Refugio and the Gaviota — for the speedy dispersal of the goods across the sierra to the interior where three necessitous Missions were, and the *Camino Real* leading to others along the coast.

Among the vessels that habitually dealt in contraband was the American ship Mercury, George Washington Eayrs, master, and one day in the summer of 1813, as she lay all unsuspecting at anchor off El Refugio, the coast guard unluckily found her and took ship and skipper into custody, ending the California career of both. Eayrs had an inconsiderate habit of keeping letters that his customers wrote him, and among the papers in his cabin were some that proved interesting tidbits to malicious historians. From Mr. Richman's entertaining volume, "California under Spain and Mexico," I quote a

note that sounds like the work of the doughty old Padre Martinez, of San Luis Obispo, who doubtless was no infrequent visitor at El Refugio. Its few words outline pleasantly, I think, a picture of what was to follow — Eayrs, keen-eyed, weather-beaten of skin, we may suppose, twisting his chin whisker, sitting across-table from the bluff Padre of San Luis in rumpled gown rather soiled under the chin, both sipping claret and chaffering over cotton cloth and blankets, soup tureens and shaving basins, a stolid Indian *muchacho* at each elbow to brush away the flies. "Friend Don Jorge," so the Padre writes, "Greeting. I expect you to dine with me at the *casa del rancho*. Come with this *vaquero*, and we will talk of what is interesting in the news from Europe and the whole world. We will also trade, unless you bring things as dear as usual. The boy says that you asked him why I was out of humor with you, and I say I am out of humor with nobody. *Adios*. Since I do not know what you bring, I ask nothing; and since you say nothing, I get nothing. Thy friend, q.b.t.m. Fr. Luis."

What is it about bandits and smugglers that catches the fancy of even the most exemplary citizen? Whatever it may be, it gives to the coast at El Refugio a touch of romance that insures the region an interest while traveling human nature remains what it is.

Where the Coast Highway crosses the Cañada del Refugio, a dirt road branches off and follows up the bottom of the *cañada* beside a small stream, and one

June morning I took to it afoot having a mind to see the world from the crest of the range. The dewy air was vocal with bird song; lingering flowers of godetia — the "farewell-to-spring" of popular speech — flecked with pale magenta the gray of the dusty roadside banks; live-oaks and sycamores, noblest of the coast trees and beloved of all wayfarers from Portolá's days to ours, tempered with occasional shade the fervor of the sun. It was beside this road, some three or four miles in from the beach, and out of sight of predaceous rovers of the sea, that Don José María Ortega built a home to replace that burned by the *Insurgentes;* but it, too, is now gone, only the foundations traceable by the industrious antiquary. Here was planted a vineyard which Don José and his son Antonio María tended and which became one of the most famous in all California for its wines. One sort, known as *Vino Oporto del Refugio*, is said to have been made from a secret recipe brought by the Padres from Spain. This recipe descended upon Antonio María's death to his son José Manuel, and the wĭnepresses of El Refugio continued to issue the rare vintage until sometime in the 1860's when death gathered Don José to his fathers and with him the famous secret.[1] Gone, too, is the famous old vineyard, save for a straggling, knotted trunk or so, but, near the spot where I guessed the ancient *casa del rancho* must have stood, a little wayside restaurant made advertisement of lunches and wine of local manufacture.

[1] I am indebted for these facts to Mrs. Katharine M. Bell, a lineal descendant of the Capitan José Francisco Ortega.

At the mountain foot the road struck upward in full sunshine, zigzagging steeply through several miles of chaparral, revealing as it rose wide and then wider views of the Pacific. Climbing leisurely, I was overtaken by a good-natured man in a buggy, who invited me to ride — a squat, swarthy man with bushy eyebrows and a scrub of black beard, his speech a mushy sort that betokened, I thought, the Portuguese, as proved to be the case. He delighted to talk, and was not long in telling me of the land of his nativity and how, while still a lad, he left home thinking to make an easy fortune in America; "but, man," he said, looking at me in a sort of childlike wonder, "I soon found fortunes don't come so easy, and I've had to work like hell ever since I landed." So, chatting of divers things — crops, the weather, Tiburcio Vasquez the bandit, the population of Los Angeles ("Man!" he exclaimed, breaking into a gust of laughter, when I told him half a million, "man, to think of that many men and women all together in one place like in that flat down there! I'd like to shee that. Ho! ho! ho") — we came to the crest of the range and the Pass of El Refugio, where my charioteer dropped me and turned off to some ranch of the mountain.

The Refugio Pass is a pleasant, grassy flat, flower-bespangled in season and dignified at all times with the presence of wind-blown old live-oaks. Ballard Creek, a tributary of the Santa Inés River, heads up here, and in the pleasant shade of the noble trees, fanned by a breeze off the ocean, many a time, I take it, some friar of the Missions has paused for

breath and refreshment; for the old Indians have testified that this pass was the customary route taken by the Padres of Santa Inés in their trips to the Mission Santa Bárbara and returning. For my own ease I picked out the shade of a sturdy old madroño, one of a number whose presence here surprised me, for this tree, one of the most dramatically beautiful of the California sylva, is exceedingly rare in the south, though plentiful enough in the central and northern parts of the State.[1] The madroño is a sort of glorified manzanita, with the remarkable ruddiness of trunk and branch that characterizes the latter, but altogether a more distinguished subject, straighter and lither of limb, and vastly taller, a superb tree in its best development when it has been known to attain a height of over a hundred feet. Forty or fifty feet is more usual. The smooth, ample, leathery leaves, suggesting the magnolia's, shine in the sun as if varnished. In their prime a vigorous green, they ripen in midsummer to a rich crimson and gold, and, long before the neighboring sycamores and cottonwoods are giving up their foliage, the madroño leaves drop to earth, where they spread themselves, a colorful carpet, beneath the trees, reflecting brightness. Yet the tree is never without foliage, the new unfolding as the old is shed. Simultaneously with this, the delicate bark cracks

[1] This group of madroños in the Refugio Pass is notable as the most representative in Southern California. At the three or four other known stations for it in the south — as on the Mount Wilson and Sturtevant Trails near Pasadena, in Las Tunas Cañon in the Santa Monicas, and near Pauma on Palomár Mountain — the individuals are little more than slender shrubs.

and peels, slipping off in cinnamon shreds and quills, exposing the new bark in tones of tender green and pale yellow that deepen soon to red. In autumn an added touch of beauty is given by the abundant clusters of orange-red berries, a quarter to half an inch in diameter and rough of coat like small strawberries — the fruitage of the spring's white urn-shaped flowers, and a rare treat for the birds. Crimson and gold, orange and green, yellow and red — so kaleidoscopic a tree well merits Bret Harte's apostrophe to it as Harlequin, Captain of the Western Wood. It is a tree linked with California's earliest history, for on that famous march of Portolá up the coast in 1769, his hungry troopers, attracted by the berries, gave the tree the name by which they knew the strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*) of their old home overseas; that is, madroño. It was a good piece of naming, for it is really closely akin to its European namesake. The first botanist to detect it was the Scot Archibald Menzies, who accompanied Vancouver to the Pacific coast in 1791, and in whose honor the tree was given scientific recognition as *Arbutus Menziesii;* for it is a true arbutus, a name to which the little creeping beauty of Eastern woods called arbutus is not scientifically entitled.

To the north the Pass looks into the lovely valley of Santa Inés through whose oak-dotted grainlands and wild pastures the river of that ilk cuts its way seaward between glistening borders of willow and cottonwood. Far down there, a flash of brightness in the midst of the green, was the white-walled Mission Santa Inés, in whose church our recent acquaint-

ance "Diablo" Chapman was married to Guadalupe Ortega, and where, the records say, he built the Fathers a grist-mill. Lolling under my madroño tree this June day there comes to me a personal memory of the old Mission which I will share with you. Hanging about the Mission until three or four years ago, when Death bore him to his long home, was an interesting and unusual character named Fernando Cárdenas — a quaint little figure of a man, a scant five feet in his heeled shoes, still sprightly for all his fourscore years; a lean and withered man, his gray features of a quality betokening the Latin rather than the Indian that he really was. But an Indian out of the ordinary; a Christianized Peruvian, my first and only Quichua acquaintance; and I found a touch of romance in associating with one in whom the blood of the Incas flowed. The sight of him, a living son of ancient Peru, seemed to materialize for me certain ghosts of history — as Manco Capac and Atahualpa, Pizarro and the *conquistadores*. By the favor of Padre Alejandro, of the Mission, he had the use in his latter years of a little strip of tillable land under the hill by the Mission, and a bit of cabin with two rooms, where he slept and cooked his bachelor meals when he was not off in the hills. Away from his *casita* he was equally at home lodging within the green curtains of an enveloping oak, or at some rancher's hearth where his good manners and varied gossip (he had an accurate and far-reaching memory and could give you the intimate history of half the *hidalguería* of Spanish California) made him generally welcome. Arriving in

California by way of Mexico when hardly more than a lad, he knew Los Angeles and Santa Bárbara while their manners were still those of easy-going Spanish pueblos, and had seen Joaquin Murrieta, the bandit-to-be, in his 'prentice stage of gambler. Thence he came over the mountains and fell in with the remnants of the Mission Indians at Santa Inés. That was in the 1850's, and there, they say, love tossed him to the feet of a girl who first encouraged him and then jilted him; and whether out of hurt pride or another reason — he considered himself a round or two higher on the social ladder than any California Indian — he never married. His bright mind and innate gentility made him able to pick his company, and he always had friends among the *gente de razón*, by whom he was given opportunities of self-education of which he availed himself with assiduity, reading history and theology out of Mission libraries in his leisure from sheep-shearing and such other ranch labor as he resorted to for the wherewithal of existence.

Latter-day historical students found Fernandito — the little Fernando, as they called him in distinction from Fernandos of longer limb — a rich and remarkable depositary of information touching Mission and Spanish-Californian matters; and he was always willing to talk of those simpler times he had known and loved, when Californians lived leisurely in the sunshine in fair weather and by the fireside in foul, not yet entangled by the craze of money-getting and the love of lawyers, and when no Indian was grudged a bit of land to put his cabin on. To

Padre Alejandro he was a compound of usefulness and annoyance. In straightening out the tangled troubles of the mission's dusky communicants the Padre sometimes found him an aid of the first water because of his intimate knowledge of everybody's affairs and of Indian character. Moreover, he was a rare hand at singing masses, and could handle a musical service alone if others failed; but on the other hand, he loved to spend hours sitting in an easy-chair and smoking cigarettes, strewing the neat mission corridor with chewed stubs and burnt tobacco to such an extent that the poor padre, following him up with broom and dustpan, would be out of all patience and scold him roundly.

Among the pleasant pictures of my mental gallery is one of Fernandito's little garden under the hill, the Lompoc breeze (as they call the wind from the sea at Santa Inés) passing caressingly over his rows of beans and peppers, Fernandito himself in faded blue jumper and overalls, bareheaded and leaning on his hoe as he watched the fog-rack drifting across the sierra's crest. I had called for enlightenment about the Indian uses of certain plants.

"You are welcome," said he, "let us go into the house and sit down."

Placing for me the one chair of his modest establishment and himself taking an upturned box, he rolled himself a cigarette with deliberation and struck a match. In a dreamy haze of the smoke drifting across the open doorway, the pleasant days of his early manhood took form again. His language was surprising in its correctness and richness of ex-

pression, his voice soft and low; and as he chatted on, following the cue of an occasional question and adding cigarette to cigarette, I, too, felt myself looking in at a vanished life — at the digging of wild onions in the spring, the harvesting of *chia* with paddle and basket in the still days of summer, the autumnal gathering of acorns and islay, the sun-drying of tunas picked from the Mission hedges, the grubbing up of amole roots for soap (as cleansing as any from the white man's factories), the soaking of ash twigs in water to color it violet[1] and give it a touch of freshness — a delicate beverage that, fitter, you would think, for some delicately raised princess of the blood than for savage palates. And then there was the making of *nopalito* stew. The tender young joints of the flat-jointed cactus were taken before the spines had hardened, peeled and boiled, then served with chili sauce — a fine dish for Fridays when meat was prohibited. It was a life, moreover, when doctors were not, when the sick cured themselves; for was there not *yerba santa*, whose young shoots and leaves put in a bottle in the sun melted into a soothing palliative for coughs? And were there not nettles by every stream to whip your joints with when rheumatism got in them?

Of such Arcadian doings did Fernando tell, lingering lovingly over the details with half-closed eyes and shedding cigarette stubs liberally on the floor beside him. As he unfolded the particulars of that ancient economy, I realized again how alike under

[1] Only the shrubby species, *Fraxinus dipetala*, I think, has this curious property.

the skin are Judy O'Grady and the Captain's lady. Just as certain of our white womankind are famous above others for their housewifery, so among the dusky Juanitas and Marías of Fernando's youth there would be one here and there with such a reputation for the excellence of her acorn meal that other families would come to her for their supplies and pay for the accommodation. And I found it interesting, too, to learn that just as the wild flavor of venison pleasantly touches something primitive in our civilized inwards, so, for all the refinements of the padres' bake-ovens and kettles, did the mission neophytes hold their taste for the wild fruits of their gentile estate. There was, so to phrase it, a gamy tang to acorn mush and *chia* gruel that was lacking in the properer wheaten bread and barley broth.

"Just to look at, too, it was a different California in those days," Fernando went on. "On the big ranches near Los Angeles — the San Pasqual, the Dominguez, and such like — I can remember the country for solid miles thick with mustard, alfilerilla, and bur-clover. No orange groves or walnut orchards then except in a small way near the mission. And when summer came and the mustard was dead and the dry stalks left standing, fire would get into it and spread roaring over the plains, driving horses and cattle frightened before it. And the spring, how beautiful it was! The country — and California in those days was all country, there were no real cities and the towns were small — the country looked like it was covered with a woolen carpet woven with flowers of different shapes and colors laid down over

valleys and hills. Yes, it was a beautiful land to see, that old California."

A look of wistfulness came into the old face, and he added simply: "I don't want to die. I can't see anything down in the ground; and I *like* to see."

Poor Fernandito! A few months later I was in the Mission church and heard Padre Alejandro announce a mass for the repose of the soul of Fernando Cárdenas. His kindly eyes were closed on earthly scenes forever, but I think a great surprise was in store for him — the sight of far fairer prospects than he had ever conceived of; for he was a good Indian.

IV

THE LOST PASS OF SAN CARLOS

A COMFORTABLE and not unusual experience in the lot of many men is the inheritance of property, real and personal, from one's relatives; but to Don Juan Bautista de Anza, *comandante* of His Catholic Majesty's garrison at Tubac, there was bequeathed a more noteworthy inheritance, to wit, a dream pregnant with fame. That was in the early 1770's in what is now southern Arizona, but was then part of the Mexican province of Sonora. The father of our Don Juan was also a soldier of Spain, stationed at a frontier post in the desert, on the route of the earliest Spanish exploration of the Southwest. That way, in their day, had passed Fray Marcos de Niza, "guided of the Holy Spirit" and friendly natives, blazing a path for Coronado and his gold-thirsty *conquistadores;* and that way, a century and a half later, the intrepid old Jesuit Padre Eusebio Kino had come and gone and come again in quest of souls to save and geographic truth. Kino, it would seem, was the first to establish the fact that California is not an island, as for over a century it was thought to be, and so gave stable basis for the belief that its Pacific shores might be reached from Mother Mexico by an overland march more dependable than the uncertain sea voyage in the crazy little ships of the period, whose arrivals, ever at the ca-

price of wind and wave, were quite unpredictable. Such was the conviction of Anza senior; and, in his leisure from Apache raidings and dress parades, he indulged the dream of some day conducting an *entrada* across the unexplored desert and mountains to that fair land beside the western sea of which early navigators, like Rodriguez Cabrillo and Vizcaino, had left engaging reports; but the hand of the Spanish Government lay heavy in those days on individual initiative, and the old soldier died without being permitted to set foot in California — died disappointed, but with faith unshattered. To the son, however, who had shared his father's confidences and name, was vouchsafed the honor of realizing the elder's hope, and so accomplished one of the notable achievements in the history of our Pacific coast — the first crossing of the California sierra by white men, followed up a year later by the safe convoy over the same route of the band of colonists, men, women, and little children, with their goods and cattle, who were to lay the foundation of the city of San Francisco.

What way across the mountains did they go and what pass brought them down into the fertile plains of their search? Whatever the route, it never became an established trail, as did the other paths of the pioneers of which we have been gossiping; and even the memory of it passed away. Yet none of the old trails, I think, has a more potent appeal to the latent romance within all of us than this of Anza's. That it should have got lost is not Anza's fault. Both he and Padre Font, the priest who looked out

for the spiritualities on the expeditions, left diaries with notes of the daily marches, including distances and general direction traveled; so there is definite evidence on which to plot out the route. Oddly enough, historians until a few years ago, ignoring or disbelieving the explorers' plain statements, assumed that Anza followed the desert as the railroad and automobiles do to-day, skirting the Salton Sink and so up the Coachella Valley past Indio and Palm Springs, going out through the pass between the peaks of San Jacinto and San Gorgonio — the present Pass of San Gorgonio — and thence into the Valley of San Gabriel. To us who know geography so much better than Anza did, it may seem strange that he should have picked out another way; but his guide, a San Gabriel Mission Indian, who had run away to Mexico across the mountains, piloted him that way, and in a strange country you do not want to teach your guide. A few years ago, Mr. Zoeth S. Eldredge, of San Francisco, a zealous student of early California history, resolved to track Anza according to the diaries and clear up the route he followed. In his task he had the assistance of the Government Land Office, the Geological Survey, and United States engineers familiar with the country. The investigation was continued over a considerable part of four years, for Anza's ecclesiastical naming of his nightly camps and water-holes was utterly forgotten — not one of his names persisting to recent years.

The diary jottings are sufficiently explicit, however, to enable us to identify the daily halts with

reasonable certainty; and this the more readily because the region traversed is to-day almost as little touched by man's exploiting hand as it was in Anza's time. On the authority of the diaries, then, the passage of the sierra was unquestionably by way of Coyote Cañon, whose broad wash opens into the desert some twenty-five miles in an airline west of the Salton Sea. Ascending this cañon to the head of one of its upper branches, the expedition crossed over the backbone of the range — *culebreando*, that is, "snaking their way," as Padre Font puts it — to a highland *bajío* or flat, which Anza named *El Puerto Real de San Carlos*, the Royal Gateway of Saint Charles, where amid snowy surroundings they were dramatically welcomed by salvos of thunder and an earthquake. Thence by comparatively easy ways the party descended the mountain, passing near the present site of Hemet, and so to the pleasant plains of Santa Ana and San Gabriel. A preliminary reconnoissance by Anza was made with a small body of soldiers in the spring of 1774, when the mountains were verdant and flowery up to the edge of their snowclad crests; but the colonists were taken across in the last days of December of the following year, when the conditions were far different; for even then a characteristic of the California weather was "unusualness," and that winter was remarkable for its severity. On Christmas Eve — *La Noche Buena* of the Spanish calendar — amid the wild crags of the sierra's upper reaches, one of the women was taken with the pains of labor, and a halt was called over Christmas Day on her account. The mountains

were hung about with snow; there was a cruel cold in the wind; the ground was sodden with chill rains recently fallen. Into a world so inhospitable this little Californian — a man child — came trailing his clouds of glory, and, strange to say, throve, as did the mother after a hard fight at the very gates of death. And this, though she had neither physician nor nurse, if we except the sympathetic women of the party, honest Padre Font with his prayers, and Anza, who, in a rough sort of way, played doctor on occasion for his people. Poor sister, her *Noche Buena* was become in truth a *Noche Triste*. I think the *comandante*, though perhaps chafing at the delay, was rather proud of his expedition's birth record, for he is careful to note that this case made the eighth of the kind since the beginning of the march in Sonora, all happy deliveries "in the open air." It would be worth knowing the name of that brave mother facing her time in surroundings growing ever bleak and bleaker. The child's baptismal name has been preserved to us — Salvador Ignacio, bestowed by Padre Font on Christmas morning. Did the boy grow up, I wonder, to leave descendants? It would be something out of the common to have for an ancestor one whose birth was accomplished under such wild circumstances and on so historic a journey.

On a day in late April another and I prodded our complaining burros by many a zigzag through bristling cactus and splintered stone over the skirts of Coyote Mountain up to the rock-cluttered backbone of the desolate range that forms the northern wall

of Coyote Cañon. From that sunny height looking southeastward, our eyes rested on the gray sands of Borrego Valley drifting away into the mists of Mexico and checkered here and there in the foreground with square patches of green, the crops of the occasional desert homesteaders whose search for cheap land has taken them there to a doubtful struggle with heat and drought. At our feet, a thousand feet below, lay the broad, sunbaked wash of Coyote Creek, whose waters traveling finally underground are the thread by which those little desert ranches keep a hold on life; while westward the cañon that gives the stream birth stretched back mile upon mile, dotted with scrub, until lost to our view in the tumbled maze of peaks and ridges that form the southern prolongation of the San Jacinto Sierra. Thus unrolled before us was the line of perhaps two days' march of the Anza party as it emerged from the desert and disappeared into the mountains. For an hour we lay and looked and dreamed, calling up in fancy the movements of that long-drawn-out cavalcade. The diaries make this possible with some accuracy. Four horsemen went in advance as scouts, and then came the *comandante* in cloak and plumed sombrero, accompanied by the Padre in dusky blue gown with dangling crucifix. To them succeeded the mob of colonists, men, women, and children, and soldiers' wives — a hundred and fifty or so in all — and behind these a rear guard of a few soldiers. Then came the trains of pack-mules with baggage and provisions, the loose horses (they left Tubac with several hundred), and the cattle herd which

provided the people their daily beef. When camp was pitched at night, the appearance was almost like a village, with tents for the women and children and sub-officers, and a big marquee for the *comandante*, the soldiers and civilian men accommodating themselves in impromptu *ramadas* of boughs, when obtainable, over which they spread their cloaks and blankets. A tired company they usually were, you may be sure, and, supper dispatched, they were glad to sing their *salves*, each family by itself, beside the dying camp-fire and turn in early for such rest as the night had in store for them. In the morning the mules and horses were rounded in, and, while the packing and saddling went on, the Padre at his little improvised altar said mass for his flock. Then, when all was ready, the order to mount — *Vayan subiendo!* — was given, and as the company got under way the Padre's voice would be heard outlining the *Alabado*, that beautiful hymn of praise to the Virgin which accompanied Old Spain's sons and daughters on all their pioneering, the people responding as they rode.[1] Three or four leagues (seven and a half to ten miles) was their average day's journey.

It cost us a long search to find the dim beginning of an old trail leading down our mountain into the cañon. With infinite labor, now jabbed by cactus, now stumbling on unstable stones, we managed to get the burros down into the wash of the creek, up which we turned through such a forest of ocotillos as were worth many a mile of travel to see. Mile upon

[1] Coues, *On the Trail of a Spanish Pioneer*, vol. I, p. 73; condensed from Font's *Diario*.

mile of them there were, slender, almost leafless stems rising in spiny sprays to a height of ten or twelve feet and tipped in midair with liberal combs of scarlet flowers then in perfection of bloom. The effect of these fiery arcs of color against a sky of Italian blue was dramatic; but we were glad to escape shortly into more open country because of the peril to the packs from the vicious thorns, into which our perverse animals delighted to sidle with their burdens. All the sandy way was gay with flowers — with the intense blue of daleas, the vivid yellow of encelias, the white and gold of thistle poppies, the red of beloperones. Willows and mesquites made green the creek borders, and we could in some measure imagine the relief of Anza's desert-worn folk at finding themselves beside rippling waters with fodder for their weakened beasts, for we, too, had just come off the desert, had been thirty-six hours out of reach of water save what was in our canteens, and had made a dry camp the night before. By and by the cañon sides drew nearer and we came upon a spring gushing lustily from the bank into a pool crowded with plump watercresses whose stems were as thick as one's thumb. Two other springs near by made the vicinity a likely one for Anza to have camped in, and we wondered if it might not be the one that he called *El Fuente de Santa Caterina*, Saint Catherine's Fount. Beyond this a little way the trail brought us into a sequestered theater of the hills with wild grapevines in blossom, encompassing with subtle fragrance a green flat, the Collins Valley of modern maps. Here, more remote from public haunt than

ever was Duke in Arden (we had not seen a soul for three days and should not for three more), was the solitary cabin of a homesteader. I doubt if from one month's end to another he heard the sound of other voice than the sad whistle of the killdeer skimming the waters of the creek, the lament of wild doves in the chaparral, or the riotous yelping of coyotes in the hills. Certainly we did not, as we plodded up the cañon, joyous in a world innocent of newspapers, telephones, or any of the blighting enginery of man. Obedient to wilderness etiquette we turned in at the cabin and knocked, but got only an echo in return. The owner was away. We were sorry, for a neatly lettered sign tacked upon his door revealed him a man of humor. It read: "No Agents or Peddlers."

Above Collins Valley the waters of the creek began to dwindle, finally sinking to invisibility through a sieve of gravel. Somewhat short of the point of disappearance, we camped for the night, making our beds in the sand amid embowering scarlet beloperone. A full moon looked over the eastern rim of mountain and flooded the cañon with light till every rock and shrub seemed tipped with silver; the little stream winding among the boulders murmured a quiet evensong; and, between watching the one and listening to the other, sleep came but slowly. On the morrow, following up the dry wash all glorious in its spring adorning of wild bloom, we were, before we realized it, entering the broad mouth of Horse Cañon. This is the most natural thing in the world to do if you are ascending Coyote Cañon, for it seems a proper extension of the latter, which here

"THE LOST PASS OF SAN CARLOS," SAN JACINTO MOUNTAIN

crooks an elbow to the left into an unpromising jumble of mountains. At this point the historians of the Anza trail have fallen out. Eldredge is certain the party followed Horse Cañon and over the divide to Vandeventer's Flat which he would identify with El Puerto de San Carlos of the diaries. But another student of the route, Dr. Herbert E. Bolton, of the University of California, a painstaking delver into the original sources of Southwestern history, has lately been going over the region in person, interviewing old residenters, and is equally convinced that Anza left Horse Cañon to the right, and, ascending the hillside, followed a ridge between the adjacent Tule and Nance Cañons. At the head of the latter a trail passes into Terwilliger Valley through a rocky gap, from which, on a spring day, you will have an entrancing view of San Jacinto's snowy crest above grassy plains brightened with the dear familiar wild flowers of California — nemophilas, penstemons, mariposas, gilias, lupines, owl's-clover, and many another. Standing there with the diary in your hand you will, perhaps, find it hard to deny the excellence of Dr. Bolton's claim that this, rather than Vandeventer's, is the *real* Puerto Real de San Carlos, whence Anza records, "may be discovered some very beautiful plains, green and flowery, and the snowclad sierra with pines, oaks, and other trees proper to cold countries. In it the waters are divided, some running to the Gulf and others to the Philippine Ocean" (as they sometimes called the Pacific in those days).[1]

[1] These two locations of the Pass are but five or six miles apart in an airline.

But that day we were for Vandeventer's, and Horse Cañon was the way. Out of it a trickle of water came to greet us, increasing quickly, as we ascended, to a dapper little stream, sparkling and dancing to our lips as we lay down to quench our thirst in it. A widish, sunny, inviting way, the cañon led us easily along for a few miles, but then troubles began to accumulate. It ceased to be one cañon, and split up into forks; such trail as there was either vanished altogether or lost all character in a criss-cross of cattle tracks. Although the head of the cañon seemed plainly in view, we had time and time again to retrace our steps for a fresh start, and wasted hours searching for the real trail — our only hope for a proper issue from so rough a region. When at last we did find it, we knew it by the "ducks" or stones laid on the trail-side rocks. By such slight signs the cattlemen and occasional Indians, who are virtually the only travelers of that chaotic wilderness, recognize their *camino real.* One stretch of it follows the comb of a ridge that divides two branches of the cañon, and climbing it brought us to an outlook where we had a long view of Coyote and its tributaries, cutting through a basin of roundish, scrubclad hills and ridges set in the midst of a larger amphitheater of mountains — that grim sierra to which the colonists (used to the warm south) looked up with trepidation, so filled was it with snow in the wintry weather of their crossing that it was a marvel (says the diary) that so much could be gathered together.

To us, too, a taste of winter was given, in the

guise of a biting wind, which swept down from snow-covered summits as we made our camp beneath some cottonwoods near the cañon's head, and sent us shivering into our blankets at sunset. I waked at midnight to the sight of an aerial battle that held me fascinated for a long while. The wind was still blowing a gale and had whirled up from the coast a skyful of white vapor in billowy masses, which rolled and plunged about far above me in a fierce endeavor to get across into the heavens' eastern half. There the full moon rode in triumphant majesty, and some unseen influences of the desert were continually checking and beating back the charging fog squadrons, breaking them at the zenith into swirling rack that now and again ripped open its whole depth and revealed, as at the bottom of an inverted well, a star or two glittering coldly in the farthest sky. When we rose at dawn, perishing for the solace of a fire and hot chocolate, the fog was gathering its wounded together, and sullenly and in shreds retreating down the west; and all the east was limpid clear with the foretaste of the sun.

Vandeventer's Flat is a green highland valley, nearly a mile above sea level, nestling between the skirts of Mounts San Jacinto and Santa Rosa. To it many trails lead — from Palm Cañon, from Indio, from Baptiste and the Cahuilla country, and from the valleys of the coast; and hither a half-century ago came one Vandeventer out of the desert with his Indian wife, settled, ran cattle, hunted, and reared a family in the usual fashion of the mountain people. His entrance upon the boards of California history

appears to have been as the keeper of a station on the old stage-route between Los Angeles and Yuma. That was at Palm Springs, where he dispensed refreshment (largely liquid and alcoholic, I take it) to travelers suffering discomfort from the desert's dust and heat. One day, so the story goes, there drifted into the Springs a Yaqui Indian with a daughter of so great comeliness that Vandeventer, who was a bachelor, took a fancy to her and, after a disgraceful custom of the border at that time, proposed to the father to buy her. The old Indian, however, who seems to have been the better civilized of the two, refused to do this unless the suitor would marry the girl. "That's all right," said Vandeventer, "here's a padre now; let's settle it," pointing to Hank Brown, a famous character of those days who drove a stage. Brown was a smooth-shaven, rotund sort of man, and made in appearance a good imitation of a priest. "Sure, I'll marry you, why not?" he replied when the matter was broached to him, and with suitable solemnity mumbled some hocus-pocus over the couple. Mock ceremony though it was, Vandeventer was faithful to his dusky bride, and, it is said, had a legal marriage performed later on.

The sun was low and the wind blew shrewd and nippingly through the Pass as we drew up before the old Vandeventer cabin beside a huge cottonwood.[1] The Flat had passed out of private ownership and become a Government Reservation for the remnant

[1] Since our visit the cabin has disappeared, all, that is, except the stone chimney and blackened fireplace, which still stood a picturesque ruin beneath the sheltering cottonwood in 1920.

VANDEVENTER RANCH HOUSE (NOW DESTROYED), VANDEVENTER'S FLAT, SAN JACINTO MOUNTAIN

of the Santa Rosa Indians, whose little cabins were dotted about in the shadow of the trees. In the doorway of the former Vandeventer homestead sat an old fat Indian in overalls, contemplatively smoking a cigarette while he watched our movements. A salutation in English failed to interest him, but Spanish brought a response. He lived there, we learned, with his *muchacho*, who was named Calistro and would be home *poco tiempo*. Yes, we might camp, but it was cold in the Flat; we had better put the burros in the pasture, bring our stuff inside, and cook our supper in the cabin fireplace. He then fetched an armful of wood and in a few minutes had a cheerful blaze going on the hearth. By and by the *muchacho* came in, a strapping young six-footer, with a broad, good-humored face. He was, it transpired, an important member of the little rancheria, holding the office of policeman; and, while our rice and raisins bubbled over the fire, we held a trilingual discourse on the affairs of our common world — our communication with the father being in Spanish and in English with the son, who translated into the native Cahuilla dialect such items as he thought would interest the elder man. Indians, in my experience, have the child's distaste for the abstract and a love of the personal and detail; and my companion, who was a dweller in the near-by desert, had much to tell of desert people whom these mountain folk knew — of Pablo, who had moved down from Banning and was clearing some land for grapefruit planting at Palm Springs; of young Francisco, who was lately married; and of old Francisco, whose eyes

were sick; of the talk of a coming *fiesta* at San Ygnacio; and of the promise of a wonderful fig harvest at Martínez. Momentous topics these, each of which had to be discussed leisurely, weightily, and from many angles; necessitating the while the rolling of no end of cigarettes and their dreamy consumption. Meantime, a couple more Indian men dropped in, *parientes* of our hosts, and smoked and listened and watched our steaming skillet.

As no one showed any sign of going and our hosts made no move to start cooking for themselves, we shared our slender supper with the party, and Calistro returned the compliment by later inviting us to spread our blankets on the floor of the next room (there was only one bed on the premises, and that was used by Calistro who had acquired luxurious ways at a Government school) — an offer we had been ardently hoping for, as long before this the wind had been howling its lungs out through the Pass, and we should have made but a miserable night of it in the open. As it was, we were at least warm, though the entrance during the night of a clumsy and restless dog and an extra Indian or two somewhat interfered with our slumbers.

From Vandeventer's an old road winds and climbs by sandy arroyo and crumbling gulch into a red shank forest, and out of that into the yellow pine belt beneath Santa Rosa's peak. A characteristic cover of the flats and lower slopes of the more southern mountains is this red shank (*Adenostoma sparsifolium* of the botanists), nearly related to the more familiar *chamise* or greasewood. It is a shrub six or

eight feet in height, which finds its northernmost limit, I believe, in the San Jacinto region, and is well marked by its cinnamon-colored trunk and branches, a feature responsible for the popular name. It has another, too — "bastard cedar"; but this is fairly open to protest as a libel on the plant. Why should a badge of dishonor be fixed upon it for no fault of its own, but from our own laziness in nomenclature? It makes no claim to cedarhood. The threadlike foliage is borne mostly in tufts like little brushes, at the extremities of the naked branches from which the ragged bark hangs in dejected shreds like tattered hose and pantaloons from bare legs, giving to the plant a peculiar air of poverty. Yet out of its poverty it dispenses cheer. Its vivacious green sets off with a touch of liveliness the graver tones of the scrub amid which the extensive groves of the red shank often occur, and it gives to the air a delicate fragrance as of mingled honey and cinnamon. Few scenes are more permanently fixed in my memory than a view from a slope of Mount Santa Rosa across hundreds of acres of crowding red shank tops that compactly clothed the mountain's sunny flank, rippling and sparkling under the breeze in mobile wavelets of bright color, to break afar against the somber green of a piñon wood.

Santa Rosa Peak is worth a climb, no hard matter. From it, eight thousand feet above the sea, the chaparral-clad mountains to the south and west drift away in blue billows until lost in the mists of Old Mexico and the murk of the fogbound Pacific shore. To the east the Salton Sea is gleaming, a sil-

ver platter in the sun; and at our feet on the north the desert is spread like a map from Mecca to Palm Springs, upon which snow-capped San Jacinto and San Gorgonio look down, and in late afternoon stretch purple shadows fascinating to watch as they creep eastward, laying as they go a dark mantle on the desert. A wild, silent, lifeless sort of mountain, most of its springs sucked dry by the desert early in the year. It was because of this, they say, that the Cahuillas, who once had a rancheria among the yellow pines and black oaks under the peak, moved down to Vandeventer's; though others, less materialistic, attribute the migration to the even more serious blight of witchcraft upon the village. You may still, if you choose, see the remnants of that unsung Auburn of the Santa Rosa; its existence was the *raison d'être* of that old road we followed from Vandeventer's through the red shanks, which ends among the crumbling cabins. Abandoned *ollas*, a *metate* or two, some big acorn storage baskets once elevated high on racks well above the reach of plundering rodents, but now fallen in collapse to the ground — such matters tell of an aboriginal culture now all but gone out of California. The cabins had been made of material at hand, and one in particular I remember as a fine specimen of that form of aboriginal architecture called the *jacal*, with walls of brush reinforced with adobe mud, and an adobe chimney and fireplace. The roof was of shakes split from near-by incense cedar. Window there was none; what light entered came through the doorway and the chinks of the walls.

RED SHANK AND THE TERWILLIGER VALLEY, SAN JACINTO MOUNTAIN

About such abandoned homes — shells of a human life that has passed on to other scenes — there is always, I think, a touch of pathos, of that "sense of tears in mortal things." Abandonment means there was a parting, and with parting a wrench — none keener than in the case of the Indian, whose attachment to the place of his people is a marked characteristic. That this decaying cabin had been really a home was evident from some old letters that I found in a scrap heap on the floor. Whoever it was that lived here had a father in the Cahuilla Valley, and between the two a correspondence by letter was maintained, the amanuensis on each side, we may suppose, being some student returned from the schools. I hope it is not indelicate to share with you the simple contents of one of these letters, scrawled on cheap paper yellowed by a quarter-century of age and smudged with finger-prints. "Dearest daughter," the father dictates, his scribe setting the message down in English, I suspect, because he could not express in letters the barbarous sounds of the Cahuilla tongue nor could they be read, "Dearest daughter, I have received your most kindest letter. I was very glad to hear that you are all well and we are the same as you are; and your grandfather and grandmother they are all well too, and your aunt Antonina's little baby he died. I was there about three week ago and your aunt Maria Jesus she has a little baby now. This is all for you now, and tell Guadalupe that I send my best regards to her and tell her that her sister is getting along very nicely. She send her best love to her and we heard down here that

somebody cut Julian with knife, and so my father gone down to see him. If it is true we have to tell you some of these days. These is all for you now. I must close my writing because it is very dark. Your loving Father."

So we learn that, through that old Indian doorway, love, in dusky guise, once came and went, bearing the same dear, homely sort of news and messages that white hearts crave and cherish. Somehow, though it cannot matter now, I feel a concern about Julian, and if it was true that he was cut with a knife.

SCATTERED GRANDCHILDREN OF SAINT FRANCIS

"When the old Spring fret comes o'er you
And the Red Gods call for you —"

I

SOMEWHAT OF THE FEAST OF THE IMAGES

IN the hill country of San Diego and Riverside Counties the traveler now and then comes upon a *ranchería* of the Mission Indians, so called because they are descendants of those children of the Church which the Franciscan fathers planted a century and a half ago in the wilderness of Alta California. More specifically these Indians have been influenced by the two Missions San Diego and San Luis Rey, and are classed, according as their ancestors were affiliated with the one mission or the other, as Diegueños or Luiseños. The secularization of the mission establishments in 1834 by the Mexican Government sheared the padres of their paternal powers over their neophytes, who were then at liberty to dispose of themselves as they pleased. Some of them clung for a while to the dirty skirts of the white settlements and lamentably died of drink and the Devil; others took their way to the *monte*, to the homes of their wild kindred in the sierra, where the United States, after the acquisition of California, found them, elbowed them about from fertile valley to arid hillside as the growing white citizenship demanded, and in the bitter course of time gathered the remnants into reservations as much as possible out of the white man's way.

Here you will find them living their easy-going

lives, lodged in cabins of frame or adobe, set well apart from one another in the shade of cottonwood or oak, or, if trees be scarce, with a *ramada* lean-to where in summer the household activities and meditations may be carried on in a grateful draught of air. With a few cattle, a horse or two, and a bit of tillable acreage to put to corn, beans, melons, and alfalfa, the average family manages to keep body and soul together without outside charity; and to the income from the land something is added by the men hiring their leisurely services to white ranchers at times of sheep-shearing, cattle round-ups, and fruit-picking. Sometimes the girls go out to domestic service; and always there is the resource of basket-weaving at which the elder women are generally expert. If the reservation is of a population to warrant it, a little painted schoolhouse flying the Stars and Stripes is there; and oftener than not a cross-surmounted chapel. On stated occasions a priest from San Diego or Banning comes up to confess and to baptize, to marry and to bury. Until recently these visits were toilsomely made by horse and buggy, but in these luxurious days they are usually accomplished by automobile. As an irreverent young Indian remarked to me the other day, "The padres nowadays are sporty fellows." So, ever pursuing, does the Hound of Heaven follow, searching out the remotest mountain. And every All Souls' Night the candles of remembrance are lighted on the crowded graves of each little *campo santo;* there is the wailing of the women, and prayers for the dead are chanted.

But Indians, though on with a new religion, are slow to be off with the old; and, in spite of generations of training in Christian rites, these red mountaineers still maintain some of the ceremonies of their pristine faith. One strange one, almost but not quite gone out, is *La Fiesta de los Monos*, the Ceremony of the Images. All Indians are naturally believers in a future life; but coupled with this faith in the minds of the Southern Californians is the idea that after death the spirit is unable of itself to cut loose from its earthly haunts and set out for that land of Perpetual Plenty and Summer which is its goal. To effect the final act of release from earth is the job of the surviving relatives, who undertake it less from altruistic motives, I suspect, than from a prudent desire to avoid being haunted by the restless ghosts. The means employed is this:

When the number of deaths has reached a total of perhaps eight or ten (for the ceremony is so expensive that the cost needs to be distributed among many, and even then is apt to strip families of the savings of years), the relatives assemble, and, amid chanting, dancing, and wailing, prepare, with as much exactitude as their crude ideas of art permit, effigies of the deceased ones, being careful to reproduce any physical peculiarities they might have possessed in life, and the very fashion of dress they wore at the time of death. If, for instance, the person were blind of an eye, or had a mustache, this must be shown; if he carried a watch, the image must be so provided. Adornments, as of ribbons, drawn-work, jewelry, and so on, are lavishly added;

and finally feather-duster-like plumes, made from the plumage of certain birds, are attached to the shoulders to assist the spirit in its flight Elysium-ward. The making and dressing of the images and the attendant ceremonies consume several days, during which the bereaved families have been at the entire expense of feeding the crowd of visitors. The completion of work on the images is marked by the throwing of money broadcast among the people and by an all-night dance, which concludes when Lucero, the morning star, has reached a certain point in the eastern heavens. The effigies are then embraced with every manifestation of sorrow, placed in a hole dug for them in the earth, set on fire and burned to ashes with all that is on them. So are the chafing spirits freed from the last entanglement of this present world, and if they are to stay freed their names must never be spoken again by the living.[1]

[1] White men rarely have a chance to witness this curious *fiesta* among the mountain Indians, though at the Palm Springs Reservation, at the desert foot of San Jacinto Mountain, visitors at the adjacent winter resort have an opportunity to see some part — not all — of such ceremony performed there nearly every year. The only account of the mountain ceremony that I know of by an eye-witness was published in 1919 by the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, to the author of which, Mr. Edward H. Davis, of Mesa Grande, California, I am indebted for the facts given above. Miss Constance Goddard DuBois has described it at second-hand in her *Religion of the Luiseño Indians.*

II

OF TEMECULA AND SAN YGNACIO

FUNEREAL as the *Fiesta de los Monos* is in its purpose, the ceremony, with its attendant dancing, singing, and general sociability, lends a touch of color to a life that in the main seems to the white outsider rather drab. Altogether cheerful are certain festivals with a Christian tinge held during the summer and autumn in these mountain villages, to celebrate a saint's day, it may be, the blessing of an irrigation ditch, or what not, and the traveler with a love for the picturesque counts himself fortunate to stumble on one. One day I received a note from the Professor posted at a stamping-ground of his in the hills, telling that a chapel was to be dedicated at the Indian village of San Ygnacio in the mountains above Coyote Creek at the desert's edge; and would I not join him on the afternoon of such and such a day in the coming September at Aguanga, where the road comes down from Baptiste? He had a burro and bedding enough for two, and we could fare along together. San Ygnacio, he went on to say, is fifty miles from Temecula, the nearest railroad station, and Aguanga is a crossroads hamlet about halfway between, on a little-traveled highway threading a sparsely settled country of cattle range and brush-covered hills. "You will have to foot the twenty miles from Temecula," he wrote, "with the

chances good for a lift, and at Aguanga if you should not find me waiting, tie a note to the tree beside the bridge beyond the store, and I shall know you are on ahead and overtake you."

It was an Arcadian touch, that about a note on the tree by the bridge, and I fell in with the proposal. The day before the date set I put myself *en route*.

The conductor looked at me doubtfully when I presented my ticket for Temecula, and I had to assure him that I really meant it. The train was of but two cars, on a branch line, and long before we reached Temecula, the terminus, I was the only passenger. The brakeman took a seat across the aisle and chatted amiably about the duck-shooting prospects and the political outlook. A better Christian than I would have revealed the reason of my wanting to go to Temecula, for obviously that was what he was dying to know. A passenger for Temecula was in the curiosity class.

It was dusk when I alighted from the train, and, crossing a wooden bridge over a dry arroyo, I came to a rickety rooming-house with a starveling geranium in a pot on the window-seat. A gaunt woman took my half-dollar and silently assigned me a room for the night. Temecula is a place of some fame. Dear to the Indian heart as the scene of a hundred mythologic happenings connected with the infancy of their race and the Beginning of Things, the region became in time the site of a Luiseño *ranchería* which was there when the American settlement of California got under way. The aborigines' only offense was

that they occupied some tillable lands along a living stream, but in those rude days that was offense enough; and readers of "Ramona" will recall the pathetic account, based on historic evidence, of the Indians' eviction half a century ago to become outcasts in the land of their fathers. Temecula to-day is a dreary, treeless, mosquito-ridden hamlet, alternately blistering beneath a remorseless sun and shivering under cold, dust-laden winds that drive relentlessly across the encompassing plains. Sentimentalists will tell you that a curse is on the land because of that old injustice to the Indians; but the eating-house boniface who supplied me with supper voiced the more practical view and charged Temecula's stagnation to a cattle company which owned the country for miles around and would not sell a foot of it. Yet in one respect I found the place not altogether dead: it was something of a resort for connoisseurs of Indian basketry, because of a resident trader who had a noteworthy collection of the coiled type made by the Mission tribes of the south. I whiled away an hour in his store, and among other baskets saw some which, they told me, dated from the time of the eviction — a heartache, I fancied, woven into every strand of them.

With my breakfast in my knapsack, I was up betimes next morning, and, leaving Temecula to its crepuscular slumbers, I stepped into a road heading eastward. Lucifer with one attendant star still glowed in the eastern sky, where dawn was paling into day. Of all the hours of the twenty-four, this seems to me the holiest and the most appealing —

this that trembles on the retiring skirt of darkness to be consumed in the splendor of the sunrise. I confess to a sympathy with those Indians of whom I have read who conceived of the dawn as something quite apart from the sun — the child, rather, of Mother Night, born newly each day to die forthwith — a fresh miracle of each returning morning. The road followed the course of Temecula Creek fringed with ranches devoted to corn, potatoes, alfalfa, and sugar beets. As I topped a little knoll a mile or two on, the sun came up and spread for a brief space a golden veil over all. The roadside grasses sparkled with dew. A gentle breeze with a suggestion of autumn in it awoke, and in the grain stubble mourning doves indulged their melancholy. A young Mexican driving a milk wagon passed me, singing in a thin falsetto a wild, minor melody, one brief theme repeated over and over, dying away shortly around a bend of the road. At my right across the valley the Agua Tibia Range lifted its dun flanks to a cloudless sky, and far ahead ridge upon ridge reached to the greater bulk of the San Jacinto Mountain. By and by a man on an empty hayrack overtook me, of whom, by way of sociability, I asked the distance to Aguanga.

"It's a hell of a long way, brother," he returned, looking down at me kindly, "and a hot and dusty one. I'm going ten miles of it. Hop aboard."

It was a lift to be grateful for, relieving me of the tedium of a monotonous valley walk, and, when finally he turned into a side road and restored me to my feet, I was in a wild region of brush-clad hills close

under Palomár. I made a frugal lunch on the nuts of the Simmondsia, some bushes of which I found growing by the way, dropping their brown, hazel-like kernels from gaping husks. This Southwestern nut deserves more than a passing mention. It is the product of a shrub with persistent, thickish, gray-green leaves, abundant in many places along the mountains near the Mexican border of Southern California, and the confines of the desert. Mexicans call the oily seeds *Jojobas*, and find many uses for them. They eat them, brew of them a very palatable beverage, and crush from them an oil which enjoys a great reputation as a hair restorer. Americans as a rule regard the nut with indifference, leaving it to children and sheep.

At Aguanga the Professor was already on hand, airily clad in a blue cotton shirt, khaki trousers, and a wide-brimmed straw hat, accompanied by a solemn little donkey bearing the promised bedding in a sagging roll. While waiting for me, he had picked up an acquaintance with an old man who answered to the name of Dad and was keeping house for an absentee cattleman at the latter's ranch a couple of miles farther on. In an access of hospitality Dad invited us to spend the night there. The house proved to be an old-fashioned adobe, half dwelling, half fortress, with curious gun-holes in the walls through which to shoot at besieging foes. It was remarkable also for an acre of kitchen garden, where almost every conceivable vegetable was growing riotously, and to which our host conducted us, capping an invitation to turn to and help ourselves with the

offer of his kitchen stove to cook on. A noble stew of fresh corn, beans, and tomatoes, with the tasty addition of a few rashers of bacon, topped off with a luscious watermelon, and followed by a night of dreamless slumber in a grape arbor hung with fragrant, purple clusters, was a sound preparation for our bivouac the next evening on *pura tierra* beneath an oak after a slender repast of tinned beans and soda crackers, a few miles short of San Ygnacio.

That camp under the oak, nevertheless, lingers pleasantly in my memory because of a visitor we had. It is one of the amenities of traveling afoot that you fall in with types of humanity quite apart from any you are likely to get acquainted with from a motor-car or a horse's back. This particular visitor was a youngish man, days unshaven, spindle-legged and flat-chested, without other visible baggage than a frying-pan and a tin cup dangling from his belt. Afterwards we learned that he carried a mouth-organ, too, and in the pockets of his coat some odds and ends of eatables. Our camp-fire had attracted him, and after a cheerful salutation he asked if he might cook his supper at it. This proved to be a revelation to us in the simple life, for it consisted merely of the mixing of a little baking-powder bread in a tin cup, turning it into the frying-pan, and baking it over the flame. The unwholesome meal dispatched, he lighted a pipe, stretched his long legs along the fire, and talked literally without cessation for an hour. We were disposed to take him for a draft-dodger — the World War was then in progress — but we may have done him injustice. He confessed

to being a Canadian, and a born rover. It was an interesting world, he thought, and ought to be seen.

"Now there's the Pacific Ocean," he said, sucking at his pipe, "I've traveled all around it — Australia, Java, China, Japan, British Columbia, California, Mexico — I've been in 'em all, and mostly afoot, too. Gosh, you ought to see the tags on my clothes. A couple of months ago I was in Mexico, and, coming over the border, the U.S. Customs held me up. I was kind of shy of papers, you see, and they got to asking me all sorts of questions — where I had been and so on, and they went through me to the skin. Well, sir, I was wearing a shirt I'd bought in Japan, my pants was from Sourabaya, the puttees I had on had Singapore stamped in the leather, my hat had a Los Angeles mark on it, and I told them I was a citizen of the world. It was a stumper for the subs what sort of a bird I was, so they passed me up to the head devil, and, after he had looked me over, he said, 'Oh, he's just one of them damned fools, let him get to hell out o' here'; which, of course, suited me all right. Yes, sir, it's a great life. No, I never carry no blankets; Mother Earth and the starry dome for mine. I work a bit as I go, and live off the country stores. I let the storekeepers do my packing. You need a little bunch of money ahead against winter when traveling is bad, but that's not so hard to get. There's work in the beans around Ventura or Santa Maria; I'll strike for there in a few days now; then there's the cotton-picking in the Coachella Valley; and there's always the oil fields. Even if I don't get work, I know a man has a steady job in a sugar

factory at Oxnard; he'd slip me all the sugar I need, and it would n't be much of a trick to hide away a few sacks of beans, d'ye see; and then, if I could rustle a sack of flour and some coffee, I'd be all hunk for the wet season. I've a hunch to spend it in some old cabin or maybe a snug dry cave up in the Sisquoc country or the Cuyamas; trap a bit, quail and wild things; but I'd catch 'em alive, d' ye see, for parks and private collectors. Pinies, now, is mighty nice for cages; you get 'em in the mountains farther north — they're a kind of cross between chipmunks and gray squirrels, pretty stripes on them; give 'em a wheel and they twirl it; you've seen 'em do it. They're great company, pinies, take it from me."

So the runnel of his words dribbled on, between vigorous sucks at the pipe. My last sight of him was his settling himself for the night beside what was left of the fire, his knees drawn up to his body for greater warmth, while he droned out sentimental airs on a wheezy mouth-organ. As I drifted off to sleep, I heard him say, "Wish I could play 'Sweet Lips'; say, does either of you fellows know 'Sweet Lips'?" In the morning he was gone.

Hidden away, five thousand feet above the sea in a jumble of mountains crowding to the desert, is San Ygnacio, a sunken bowl in their midst. The bottom of the bowl is a green *ciénaga* affording pasturage to the cattle of a handful of civilized Cahuillas who live on the *ciénaga's* fringe in enough of primitiveness still to be interesting. The sides of the bowl rising steeply are furred here with chaparral and there

INDIAN RANCHERÍA OF SAN YGNACIO, MOUNTAINS OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY

scarred with barren patches of staring white earth and rocks. Trails lead upward to the jagged rim, whence the world may be viewed — a wild, silent world of mountains, cañons, sky, elemental matters. To the west Hot Springs Mountain thrusts a shaggy crest a thousand feet or so above its neighbors; northward you look along crowding ridges across the long, wavering line of Coyote Cañon, purple with shadow, to Toro broad-shouldered against the blue, with San Jacinto in the far background; south and east the range drops chaotically, four thousand feet in half a dozen miles, to Borego, Hell Hole's rocky maze, the Vallecitos, and the hazy reaches of the desert.

We found San Ygnacio in gala attire. Miguel, the local policeman, resplendent in a pink shirt, a flowing purple tie, and a new gray sombrero, low of crown and ample of brim, bustled importantly about on divers errands, now afoot, now ahorseback, keeping careful tab of all arrivals. Cabins overflowed with dusky guests in their spick-and-span best, but the housing accommodations went but a short way toward the requirements of the crowd. Luckily the out-of-doors is big, and in California one is pretty independent of a roof. All about were sociable groups of Indians camped in the open, cooking, eating, gossiping, and laughing, their wagons drawn up close by, the horses turned loose to pasture. Children romped and shouted happily; dogs met in competition over treasure trove of scraps, and quarreled viciously; at the well by the *ciénaga's* edge, women in florid calicoes chatted affably as they filled their

buckets. A wholesome-looking lot of people in the main, with ample, well-rounded forms, and flat, placid faces looking upon life with soberness and resignation.

The new chapel stood on a knoll near the ancient *campo santo* — the "holy field" — where all San Ygnacians dying orthodoxly have burial. The church was a trim little box of a building in a fresh coat of brown paint edged with white, surmounted by a trim little belfry housing a trim little bell, giving out now and then a worshipful sound pleasant to hear in that far corner of the world. The padre, a youngish, kindly-featured man lately transplanted from an Eastern college and fetched up for the dedication from San Jacinto town in a weather-beaten automobile, would get his wilding flock up to mass with music of drum and violins lustily performed by an Indian band stationed before the church door. We met him in the *fiesta* house shaking hands jovially with Juan and Marquitos, Rosita and Remedios, pinching the babies' fat cheeks, and looking good-naturedly on at the various secular diversions in progress. The *fiesta* house was a rather interesting piece of architecture, constructed on a model common for such buildings throughout the Southern California Indian country — foursquare around an ample, corridored *patio* or *plaza* open to the sky. Upon this open court all the rooms opened, after the manner of the old-time Spanish-Californian home. The building itself was roofed, walled, and partitioned with interwoven brush, upon a framework of timber, homely material brought in from the neigh-

boring mountains at no other cost than time and muscle. Entrances at two opposite corners let visitors in and out.

It was around midday when we arrived and the *patio* was as busy as an anthill. Fragrances of cooking issued from certain rooms where some of the women maintained restaurants for such as had the wherewithal to buy. María Juana Segunda, for instance, who had learned the ways of American cooks in Riverside, served for four bits a staggering dinner *al estilo americano*, as much as you could eat — heaped platters of beef, mountains of pink beans and potatoes, baker's bread from San Jacinto, all set before you at once and enveloping you with their savory incense, your coffee-cup the while kept filled by a dusky Hebe in a glow of many-colored ribbons. To top off there was a chocolate pudding, if I remember aright, or it may have been a pie; for María Juana was capable of either and knew the demands of a hearty appetite, and, unless her skill in finance kept pace with her knowledge of cookery, I very much fear the end of the *fiesta* found her bankrupt. In other rooms a bid was made to instincts more purely aboriginal, and such Indian delicacies were on sale as *tamales* in corn-husk wrappers and soggy dishes of cold acorn-meal mush. To such as preferred their own cooking, there was Juan Capistrano Siva in a rustic meat-shop offering beef cut from an animal of his own butchering, and driving quite a trade with families who were content to squat on the dirt floor of their rooms about a pot set upon a nest of blazing sticks in a hole in the ground. On another side of the

patio a raucous gramophone bellowed out melodies both Caucasian and aboriginal, attracting a crowd to a booth where articles of more glitter than worth — the catch-penny stuff of country fairs — were alluringly displayed. A door or two away, another crowd obstructed the entrance to a room from which issued the sound of many voices singing in chorus a genuine Indian melody. A game of *pion* was in progress. Eight women, four on a side, sat on the ground facing one another. Covering the laps of one side was a blanket hiding the hands of the players, who all the time were singing in unison a haunting melody of a few bars, repeated over and over. The opposing side watched the blanket closely, and now and again broke into exclamations, which excited comment and sometimes laughter from the onlookers. The animation of the scene with its musical accompaniment was enough to entertain us, though we knew nothing of the game, which had to be explained to us later. It seems the side whose hands were hidden beneath the blanket were passing certain bits of wood and bone from one to another under cover, and the task of the opponents was to guess where the pieces rested. A very simple kind of game, capable of intensely exciting these children of nature, who, until the Government placed a regulating hand upon the business, used to gamble away the very shirts from their backs, playing it.

Indians are a leisurely folk and linger over their *fiestas* as a cow over her cud. Why hurry through a good time? This particular one was to last several days, and families from far and near had gathered

to it — from the Mexican border to the Morongos and from the desert *rancherías* about the Salton Sea. *En route* to San Ygnacio we had passed many of their camping-spots, marked by scatterings of hay and the blackened ashes of their fires. The *pièce de résistance* of most Indian gatherings comes at night. Two dancing-floors are prepared in the *plaza;* one of boards laid for the younger generation, educated in white ways, to do their two-steps and fox-trots on, to the scraping of civilized fiddles; the other of beaten earth for the old Indian dances. Near at hand fuel of tree-trunks and dry branches are piled; and following an afternoon of athletic doings, such as baseball, horse-racing, bronco-busting, and exhibitions of picking a hat off the ground from the back of a horse urged to a dead run, the crowd gathers with the dusk in the *plaza* and the bonfires are lighted. Perhaps there is a bit of the white man's dancing as a preliminary, but as the night mellows toward ten o'clock the crowd thickens about the floor of beaten earth, the fire-tenders mend the fire with a fresh log or two, and an air of expectancy settles upon all. Two or three old men, wrinkled and frosty-haired, seat themselves on a bench at one side of the dancing-space, which is lit up by the glare of the great logs. Then a number of women group themselves on the ground across from the men and begin a strong-rhythmed song in unison. From time to time men in their everyday overalls and brogans spring from the circumambient darkness into the light, and, in time with the well-marked accent of the music, pound and inch their way round and round through the mazes

of an aboriginal dance. The song of the women is perhaps some legendary ballad of their people, recounting the deeds of their heroes when the redman was the only man. Verse follows verse, and the tune flows on in one vigorous measure that ends but to begin again. Now and then the ancients upon the bench give voice to an explosive high-pitched *Ho!* followed by an explosive baritone *Hah!* and the dancers shuffle and stamp the more energetically. Perspiration rolls from them in streams, though the night is as chill as you would expect it to be in September at a mile above the sea. When they have reached the limit of their endurance, they yield place to a fresh relay, and after a rest start in again. The Professor and I, having regard for the morrow, withdrew at midnight to our camp on the neighboring hillside; whence, rolled snugly in our blankets, we could look down in comfort on the *fiesta* going fast and furiously. It was a wild scene — in the vast darkness that spot of light with its circling, stamping figures, the rapt crowd, the waves of chanting, now *piano*, now *forte*, in a weird minor pulsating with the spirit of the primal. Once a chorus of coyotes broke out upon the mountain and the Indian dogs woke to a frenzy of barking, drowning with their bedlam for a few minutes the ordered music of the choiring women. When the fire burned low, more wood would be thrown on, and, as a fountain of flashing sparks shot up into the blackness, I thought of Saint Francis's invocation: "Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Brother Fire, by which Thou hast enlightened the night, and he is beautiful and joyous, and robust and strong."

We fell asleep with the music throbbing in our ears, and it must have been the cessation of it that awakened us hours later. There was a faint light in the eastern sky where the morning star was fading; and in the gray dawn we saw the people like shadows dispersing to their beds.

III

THE JEWEL ON PALOMÁR'S BREAST

IN San José del Valle, that great grassy highland valley in San Diego County that forms the heart of Warner's Ranch, the waters gather from the slopes of Palomár, Hot Springs Mountain, and many an unnamed peak, and give birth to the Rio San Luis Rey, which without more ado sets westward through oak-clad gorges and willowy flats, a cheerful, rippling, little stream that broadens as it runs, past San Antonio de Pala and the Mountain of the Gems into the sunny plain that fattened the ancient herds of Mission San Luis Rey; and so to the all-engulfing sea. A fairly good road follows the general course of the river, and following it from Warner's you wind in and out of the toes of Palomár, and if you know where to turn in you will find yourself by and by at the *ranchería* of Luiseño Indians known as *La Joya*, that is, The Jewel.[1] How it acquired the name I am not antiquarian enough to say, but it is not altogether an inapt one, for the little settlement with its flowers and trees is a spot of charm and color upon the mountain's drab skirt. So at least I felt it when, one late afternoon of spring, a friend and I sauntered into it, and found donkeys grazing on the green turf of the roadside, chickens at their heels, and an inde-

[1] Not to be confused with *La Jolla*, the seaside resort near San Diego. The two names have the same pronunciation.

CAHUILLA INDIAN CEMETERY, SAN JACINTO MOUNTAIN

finable smell of growing things in the cool damp air. It is, indeed, a little community of Indian farmer folk, whose holdings of land, fenced in with low, rambling stone walls and planted to olives, almonds, figs, pomegranates, apples, grapes, peaches, and garden stuff of lesser import, betoken a way of life far removed from the acorns and *pinole* of a generation or two back, and pleasant to look upon. In the midst stands a cross-crowned chapel with a huge abalone shell of *agua bendita* by the door, and hard by is a tiny schoolhouse with the Stars and Stripes afloat above it, roses clambering up the walls and lilacs blooming at the gate. The sight of so comfortable a little hamlet of aborigines, secure among their own vines and fig trees, ought to be heartening to the gloomy philosophers who regard civilization as a disease. At any rate, I found cheer in it, who am no enthusiast for forcing Indians into white men's jackets.

So it occurred to us that an Indian house in La Joya might be a good place to pass the impending night. Among the hollyhocks and irises of a little garden a plump Indian woman was hoeing, and to her we addressed an inquiry for accommodations. She looked us over in silence for a moment and then referred us to a place across the road, where, she said, people sometimes stayed. It was a house of more than ordinary pretensions, adobe with a veranda shaded by a great oak. Passing through a garden and rounding a corner, we came upon two dogs asleep in a washtub and a grandmotherly *anciana* in the shadow of the wall weaving a basket. An inquiry

in English brought an answer from her in Spanish. Her daughter, it seemed, was in charge of the house and must decide. It a moment the latter appeared from the garden carrying a bucket of pears — a neatly dressed woman of middle age, rotund of figure and placid of face, a pair of kindly eyes looking out of spectacles of ample rim. We were welcome to such as there was, she said, and invited us to the wash-basin and seats while she prepared supper. This was served upon a fresh white cloth and surprised us by its excellence — a beefsteak and potatoes, perfectly baked hot rolls, fruit of some sort, and properly steeped tea. We had as companions at the board two young Indian men of dignified demeanor, the brothers of our hostess. The father was dead, it transpired; and we learned at another time from outside sources that he had in his make-up a touch of Spanish blood. People who remembered him said he possessed the courtly manners of a gentleman of Spain. The elder son had come by something of that same Hispanic strain, I think, manifested in a long, narrow face, remarkable in a California Indian, and a manner of formal gravity. As we sat by the fire in the evening we chatted of farming, of the big timber on Palomár, of the mother's basket-weaving, of which the family seemed particularly proud. It was, in fact, an accomplishment but recently taken up. In earlier life she had been a skillful *perfiladora* — maker of drawn-work — but her ageing eyes at last balked at that, and disliking to be idle she turned her attention to basket-weaving which was less exacting of the sight, and it was as if the skill of all her basket-

weaving grandmothers came at call to her old fingertips, for her work had a professional look from the start. We were interested in what they told us of the raw material of basket-making. Before the weaving begins three plants must be sought in the sierra. First there is a certain long-stemmed grass [1] called in the Luiseño tongue *yulalish*, and to be found on dry hillsides, but by no means on every one. That is for the inner body of the coil. To wrap that, two plants are needed — *shoval*, the squaw-bush (*Rhus trilobata*), a fragrant shrub familiar to every traveler in the hills, and *shoila*, a species of rush, to find which is a long journey from La Joya, part of it only to be accomplished afoot over a narrow trail. The squaw-bush stems, stripped of their bark and split in two or three, furnish the white ground of the basket; the rush, the beautiful rich browns of the design.

The basket subject exhausted, we directed the talk to Catholic *fiestas*. To our surprise this awakened no response. "The older Indians," said he of the long face, "had another form of religion from ours." So we learned we were in a family of Protestant converts, to whom the doings at the chapel with the Latin cross and the shell of holy water were matters of small moment. Nevertheless, Protestants though we were, we paused there as we went in the morning and leaned on the palings of its *campo santo*. I think it is Our Lady of the Refuge who is the Patroness, or is it She of the Remedies? I have forgot-

[1] Botanically known as *Epicampes rigens*, sometimes called "deer-grass," a distant cousin of timothy.

ten. Always a touching sight are these God's acres of the grandchildren of Saint Francis — their dead remembered in most surprising fashion, as here at La Joya. On one grave lay a bit of crockery, on its neighbor an old shoe; here a child's set of dishes, there a broken lamp. Two flatirons on one, a clock on another, a stove lid on yet another — you would think it the work of some mischievous hobgoblin of the western world, or of sacrilegious jesters on nocturnal lark, rather than what is the fact, memorials placed by the hands of unforgetting love.

There had been a fog in the night, and as we passed out of the *ranchería* the mountain's upper reaches were still shrouded in it. From its midst came the hesitating tinkle of cow-bells and the muffled barking of dogs. On lower slopes the mist was slowly breaking up, revealing patches of green field cattle-dotted and of vineyard lit by an invisible sun. The smoke was rising from cabin chimneys, and out of an open door a couple of Indian children came running, responsive to the call of the school bell leisurely ringing. Downward, we looked under the eaves of the fog to the sunshine on the willows hedging in the waters of the San Luis Rey. Altogether it was a sort of Swiss effect, and I like to remember La Joya so.

IV

ROUNDABOUT TO PALA

"PLEASE run down and join us for a week or two," wrote Peggy in San Diego to me in Pasadena. "We long to drive back among the mountains, where they say there are real Indians and a quaint old Spanish Mission that hardly anybody ever sees, and Mother thinks a man in the car might be useful. The country is alive with wild flowers and perfectly thrilling. We have a coffee-pot and frying-pan, besides cups and things, enough for all. Do come. Biddie is behaving nicely."

The two ladies ("Biddie," it should be explained, was not a third lady, but an automobile) were doing the very sensible thing that tourists with leisure are becoming more and more inclined to do on the coast — they had bought a light, inexpensive car (you may guess the make!), and, being of an independent disposition, were driving themselves about in it, picking flowers and kodaking, buying eggs and milk at ranch-houses, and tossing up jolly little meals by the wayside when that suited them, as it did at least twice a day, and lodging at country inns when night overtook them. At the end of it all they would sell the car at a not unreasonable discount for wear and tear, as others had done before them. Comforting as luxurious hotels and palm gardens unquestionably are, the essential significance of Southern California

for a holiday lies, I think, in its opportunities for wholesome open-air activities among natural aspects so various and beautiful and so different from other parts of the United States as to seem a foreign land.

Obviously somebody had been telling them of Pala, remote among the mountains of San Diego County. Physiographically, San Diego County is a tilted plain wrinkled with arroyos and crumpled hills, rising gradually from the seacoast on the west to a rugged chain of mile-high mountains on the east — mountains that parallel the ocean and from their serene heights look both to it and the hot waste of the Colorado Desert. Except at its edge around the harbor of San Diego, the county is but sparsely inhabited, and altogether is less well "groomed" than certain other sections of Southern California that cater especially to the ease-loving tourist. In contrast to these, it possesses to a marked degree that charm of unconventional rusticity which is of particular appeal to travelers who enjoy knocking about the back country in a little unexacting car that will climb anything and take hairpin curves with neatness and equanimity.

It was noon of a mid-April day when we set out from the city of San Diego, Biddie's hold snugly stowed with wraps against chilly nights, an assortment of eatables, a couple of canteens of water, the cooking utensils aforesaid, and a little tin of native ferns packed in damp moss which Peggy was bent on keeping alive for her garden back East. We took the road traveled by the Imperial Valley auto-buses.

APPROACHING JACUMBA PASS, MOUNTAINS OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY

This follows pretty closely one of the Yuma-San Diego stage-routes of half a century ago, and the crumbling ruins of one or two of the former stations, where horses were changed and travelers got out to stretch their cramped legs, still stand to lend an historic flavor to the highway. Hollyhocks and old-timey roses made us salutation from wayside frowsy gardens. The occasional hamlets that we passed through bore pretty names inherited from their Indian or Hispanic past — Jamul, Dulzura, Potrero, Campo, Jacumba. In the main it was a wild hill country little settled, and we ran so close to the Mexican border that we could look at times across the national line fence and realize what an artificial matter political division is, for the Mexican side was as like ours as one pea is like another. To us, as to the first Spaniards, all the land appeared "of happy aspect." The melting notes of the meadowlark, most musical of birds, came down the air; yellow poppies, tidy-tips, wild pansies, and golden-starred baeria made luminous the roadside, which farther on would be touched with the graver beauty of massed lupines in purple and orthocarpus in sheets of sober magenta. Billowy hills, densely grown over from crown to toe with flowery chaparral, the joyous pasture of the bees whose little white cities twinkled about cañon mouths, were dappled in white and blue with the blossoms of the wild lilac, then in perfection. Once — I think it was as we crossed the shoulder of old Tecate, a fine boulder-crowned peak, half Mexico's and half ours, whose flanks are one vast bee pasture to which we looked up for half the afternoon — we skirted a hillside

draped with the crimson banners of that rare wild pea, *Lathyrus splendens*, whose popular name, "Pride of California," is but a futile attempt to do justice to its regal beauty. It was Sunday, and by every spring and brook cheerful groups of picnickers whiled away their holiday in the shade of oak and sycamore.

Through such scenes we purred along at ten or twelve miles an hour, stopping often to gather flowers, and, lounging on some cushiony bank, to enjoy through half-closed eyes the enchantment of the view of the far-off, misty lowlands out of which we had climbed. Heavenly weather, a good enough road, a little car behaving itself, a bit of money in the purse, and the comradery of congenial spirits — given all that, why should one grumble at a supper of tough beef and sodden potatoes, served in a second-rate hotel by the roadside? We did not; nor at our shabby rooms in a little barnlike shack near by with a lantern over the door laconically marked "BEDS" — an honest sign, for beds just about summed up the equipment of the rooms assigned us.

With the first light we were up and driving in the delicious freshness of the young morning through the Jacumba Pass, a region remarkable for the presence of strange, weather-worn monoliths scattered over the barren hills and suggesting, save for their evidently being Nature's work, the menhirs and dolmens of some prehistoric people. At the summit of the Pass the landscape quite dramatically dropped away before us, and as though a veil had parted there lay the desert — a motley spread of color, crimson, amethyst, yellow, in places glaring white. Running Biddie to

the side of the road, we unlimbered the provision baskets, built a little fire, and to the cheerful accompaniment of sizzling bacon and bubbling coffee comfortably studied geography. Far away a bright patch glistening in the sun must be the Salton Sea, backed by the dim outline of the Chocolate Mountains; nearer the wrinkled mass of the Superstitions lifted itself above the desolate waste where the redoubtable Pegleg Smith's lost gold mine is fabled to be awaiting rediscovery;[1] to the southeast an elongated smudge of green did duty for the Imperial Valley; farther south rose the isolated cone of Signal Mountain and the shadowy Cocopahs; and farther still, what could that faint gleam in the gray be but the shining of *La Laguna Salada* in Mexico, the Lake of Bitter Waters?

The scene was inviting. We were but forty miles, our road map told us, from El Centro, the metropolis of the Imperial. It was no sort of a way to go to reach Pala; but why not yield to the desert's invitation, take a day off, and returning here on the morrow pick up our road again? We reloaded our baskets, released the brake, and the car started down the long coast to Mountain Springs. Mountain Springs, where we arrived in fifteen minutes, we found to consist of a store, a gasoline supply station, and two or three shacks, in a barren, sunbaked *rincon*. The spring is a small "eyelet" of water (as the Spanish has it) welling up in a green *ciénaga* shaded by mesquites, and has been blessed of many an ex-

[1] In the Chocolate Mountains is a mine called the "Pegleg" which should not be confused with Smith's famous will-o'-the-wisp.

hausted and famishing wayfarer toiling up from the desert in other days. A little to the side of the present highway are the ruins of an ancient stage-station and stone-walled corral. Past it up a draw in the hillside go the tracks of a road now almost obliterated, formerly followed, they say, by immigrants who entered the Golden State by this route. You can, if you will, pick it out afoot, as it climbs the ridge and descends into the Jacumba Valley — gutted by decades of rain, cluttered with boulders and bordered here and there with huge, fantastic rocks grotesquely eaten and honeycombed by the weather into resemblance to eyeless skulls, misshapen monsters and creatures of nightmare. It is easy to believe Lieutenant Parke when he described this "Pass of Jacum" in 1853 as all but impossible on muleback. The wonder is how the wagons of the immigrants ever got over it; but then, that is what pioneers counted on and surmounted. There were giants in those days, and honest wagons.

We bought a loaf of bread of the grumpy storekeeper, who was grumpy for the strange reason that business was unusually good that morning. He, not foreseeing what the day was to bring forth, had been fool enough to let his wife go out for a walk, and, with the store to tend and a breakfast to get for some travelers who had chanced in, he considered himself overworked; moreover, the stage-driver had forgotten to get him certain supplies; all of which he complained about profanely as he shuffled around under a sentimental chromo simpering from the wall and entitled "My Symphony."

OLD STAGE STATION NEAR JACUMBA PASS, YUMA–SAN DIEGO ROUTE

It was a relief to leave him to his grumbling, and go down with the road into the jaws of a grim, Doréesque gorge, where a mocking stream of sand threaded a devil's garden of sun-scorched boulders, barrel cactus, Spanish dagger, and whiplike *ocotillo* tipped with flaming flowers — the happy hunting-grounds of rattlesnakes, lizards, and scorpions — out to Coyote Wells in the plain at the mountains' foot. Near here in the early days there was also a stage-station beside a water-hole of the coyotes' digging. Old-timers will tell you that when the station was abandoned (as happened when the Southern Pacific Railroad's coming killed the staging business) the coyotes came back to their well, and would be seen a hundred or two of a morning, their night thirst quenched, skulking silently off into the sand-hills under the level rays of the sunrise. To-day Coyote Wells is again a haunt of men, being a station on the San Diego and Arizona Railroad, and the wells themselves are so boxed in steel and concrete that coyotes, I guess, are cheated forever of their heritage and must dig elsewhere. A paved road, like a ribbon of stone, bore us into El Centro, the urban heart of a world of green alfalfa dotted with fat hogs, cattle and horses, of date-palms, cotton-fields, and melon-patches, where irrigation canals of muddy water crawl lazily between high banks fringed with cottonwood and eucalyptus. This was the Imperial Valley, simmering in a sub-sea-level heat intensified by the touch of humidity arising from the prevailing waters.

We spent a languid afternoon drinking loganberry

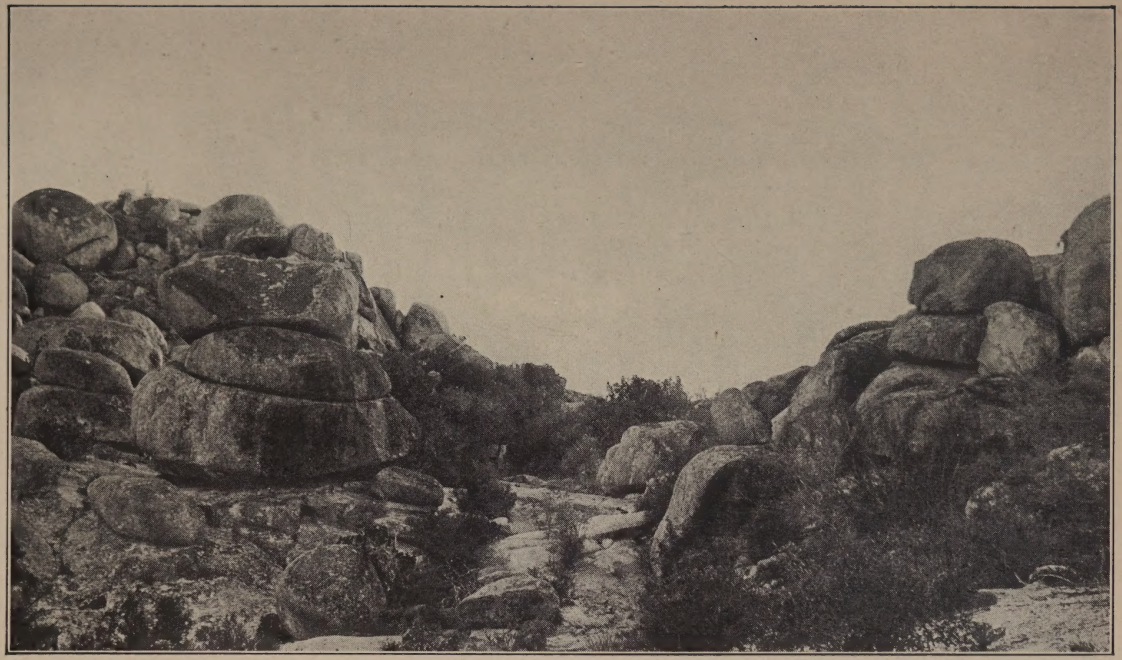
juice and watching the throngs that filled the streets of the desert metropolis. They were a picturesque jumble of masterful, coatless Americans from the outlying ranches, surging in and out of the stores and refreshment saloons; stolid Mexicans smoking endless cigarettes; silent, soft-footed Hindoos in dingy turbans; and alert, bright-eyed Japanese. Gramophones ground out strident melodies; pool balls rattled in their pockets; automobiles and auto-trucks, the twentieth-century ships of the desert, crowded all the curbs. In the morning it was a relief to flee this restlessness and racket, and in the unearthly beauty of a desert sunrise back-track across the sandy solitude to our mountain — past Coyote Wells again, Mountain Springs, and Jacumba, turning off at Campo into the Cleveland National Forest. The narrow dirt road on which we now found ourselves wove an undulating course in and out of the toes of the beautiful Laguna Mountain. In the wooded cañon below us a little brook tumbled and gurgled, a myriad wild flowers gave us welcome and *bon voyage*, and the mourning doves lamented from their coverts on the slopes. It was a region of oaks, and one deciduous sort, the stately Kellogg oak, was just coming into leaf, veiling the hillsides where it grew with a rosy mist, while on other slopes the blue of the mountain lilac in flower made pools and runnels of color even more striking. All the afternoon we loitered through this Arden solitude, meeting no one that I now remember but a band of moving gypsies, who startled us by suddenly appearing through the trees ahead and filed slowly by us in various

horse-drawn rigs of ancient pattern, their women decked out in gaudy gowns and headgear with tinkling bangles. They clamored to tell our fortunes, but we would not. However, we paid the price, we thought, when at Descanso, where in the gathering twilight we made an end of our day, Peggy found herself the poorer by a hat and I by a gold cuff-link.

Descanso remains to us a place of happy memory because we slept in tents in a grove of oaks to be awakened by the squirrels rattling acorns down upon the roof, and because it was our starting-point for a drive up Laguna Mountain. This (a twenty-mile round trip recently opened to automobiles) is one of the most interesting short motor excursions in Southern California. The upper part of the mountain is a rolling plateau diversified with sunny, parklike areas where clean-floored groves of liberally spaced pines and oaks alternate with grassy *ciénagas* embroidered at the time of our visit with violets, buttercups, and alfilerilla blooms. During the rainy season the depressions in the plateau become good-sized lagoons, a fact responsible for the mountain's name, but by summer these have dried into green meadows, and here and in the woodlands come people camping from the adjacent desert and the hot, interior valleys to while away in Arcadian surroundings a vacation from work.

To passing travelers, as we were, the Laguna's especial attraction is the unsurpassed view to be had from Monument Peak, an easy climb of a mile after driving your car as far through the woods as you can.

The peak is one of several roundish knobs that hump themselves above the general level of the plateau, and is about six thousand feet above sea level, so isolated as to afford an unobstructed outlook in every direction. On one side the desert, nearly a mile below, rolls in at your very feet, and is more satisfactorily seen, on the whole, than when viewed from higher summits, because nearer. In the opposite direction the Pacific is mistily visible, with Point Loma's long nose thrust into the surf; while north and south the crest of the sierra stretches its sinuous length from the mountains of Mexico to those loftiest of Southern California peaks, San Jacinto, San Bernardino, and San Gorgonio, whose snow-fields, winter and spring, float dreamily in the upper air — in philosophic calm detached from the things of earth. If you want an experience that will stay indelibly with you the rest of your days, spend a night on this Monument Peak, even though you must shiver through it; see in the deepening dusk the electric lights of the Imperial Valley towns leap suddenly into being and glitter like a chain of brilliants on the breast of earth; watch Orion and all the multitudinous stars pass in procession above you, in unhurried serenity sinking to the sea; see the morning star arise, the dawn awake; renew your spirit in the ineffable glory that attends the birth of a new day, and see the unrisen sun delicately transmute into rose and gold the purple blackness of the higher mountain peaks. Now and then to keep vigil thus, head and shoulders above the mists of earth, is meat and drink to the inner man.



OLD IMMIGRANT WAGON-ROAD, NEAR JACUMBA PASS

One gets so used to orange blossoms and panegyrics based upon them in the California spring, that we had a novel thrill when we drove the next evening into a country of tangled hillside fields and stone fences near the old mining town of Julian, and found apple blossoms — myriads of them — whitening the night, and filling the air with their perfume — perfume that quickened that old buried soul of the North within us which for the time the warm South had caused us to forget. And up there on a pineclad hilltop we came upon a modern hotel elaborately built of pine logs, where the amiable hostess offered us the choice of accommodations in a two-roomed cottage or in a tree-top. We conservatively took the cottage, though a daylight inspection the next morning of the unique arboreal lodgings in which this hotel specializes made us feel we had lost an opportunity.

We were now on the confines of the lovely vale of Santa Ysabel on which the triple peaks of the Cuyamacas look down; and as we drove into its verdant trough we encountered our first Indians, in pacific meditation beside a little chapel in a field. It was Holy Week, and there had, perhaps, been mass earlier in the day. Two ancient bells swinging from a rude frame in the open and a little cemetery across the road remain from the days — a century ago — when this was a live *asistencia*, or outpost, of the Franciscan Mission of San Diego. In the decline of the latter, when secularization of all the Missions was impending and the Mexican authorities were continually harrying the missionaries, this wilder-

ness station of Santa Ysabel returned a great harvest of converts, the Church's consolation when consolation was sorely needed, as Father Zephyrin, the Franciscan historian, puts it. But eventually Santa Ysabel, too, yielded to the inevitable and was dust. When services were revived there, they were held in an improvised chapel of fresh-cut boughs brightened by flowers of the field, erected each year by the Indians — a fair reproduction of the way a Mission looked at its founding, described in scriptural phrase by one of the old padres as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers. But that pretty custom was superseded a few years ago by the building of a permanent frame structure which still stands, an architectural horror. The interior, however, with its tawdry decoration, its candle-grease, and its cheap religious pictures, has the same pathetic interest that attaches to all such rural Catholic chapels in our Spanish Southwest. In the mission days this region was populous with Indians, and the primitive milling-stones where they ground their acorns into meal still abound. It pleased our fancy to cook dinner beside a flat rock pecked deep with a number of such ancient mortar holes beneath budding sycamores, a musical little brook tinkling by, and the huge bulk of the Volcan Mountain towering above us.

From the green pastures and oak groves of Santa Ysabel you pass imperceptibly to the oak groves and green pastures of the princely domain known nowadays as Warner's Ranch, the ancient Spanish grant of San José del Valle. Warner, christened Jonathan Trumbull, was a Connecticut Yankee with the in-

heritance of a forceful character in a weakling body. With the view of bettering the latter, he determined, while still hardly out of his teens, to live an outdoor life in the Far West. In the autumn of 1831 he found himself in Santa Fé, and, learning of a trading caravan preparing for California, he joined it, and late that year reached Los Angeles by way of Mission San Luis Rey, passing up from the desert, no doubt, over the very acres that fate was holding in trust for him. California agreeing with him, he became a naturalized citizen of Mexico (the only way of staying there in those days), was baptized afresh — the unpronounceable Jonathan Trumbull of his infancy being softened now to Juan José — and married a *Californiana*, a ward of Don Pio Pico's mother, I read, and of the house of Estudillo. A few years later he acquired a grant of the Rancho San José del Valle, where, as Juan Largo — that is, Long John, as he was nicknamed, for he was a very tall man — he settled down to a sort of baronial life among his cattle and Indians.[1] It was by way of Warner's Ranch that General Kearny, commanding the advance guard of the Army of the West, came with his hungry troopers after their painful passage of the desert, *en route* to the coast to finish the conquest of California for the United States; and a heavenly place the ranch must have seemed to them. It is recorded that seven of them ate the whole of a

[1] In 1841 Warner made a visit in the East, and, in a glowing speech upon the potential wealth of the West, launched the idea of a transcontinental railway. It must have seemed a crazy man's idea at the time, but a few years later, taken up and elaborated, it made another man famous.

big fat sheep at one sitting. Rancho San José was through half a century or so a famous stopping-place for travelers. This way, in the days of the Mexican régime, came the cattle and sheep drovers with their thirsty herds from Sonora and New Mexico by Vallecitos and San Felipe, to pass on to Temecula, Rancho Temescal, Santa Ana del Chino, and Pueblo Los Angeles. In the 1850's one of the important immigrant routes to California was by way of Yuma and the desert to Warner's. Many entered this way, but few went out. An eastbound traveler, indeed, was an object of surprise. A story is told by one such who met a party of Arkansawyers near Yuma as they creaked along in their prairie schooners headed naturally for the Golden State. "Hello, stranger," the leader called to him, "are you lost? You're going plumb wrong for California."

In the midst of the ranch are the hot springs of Agua Caliente, famous from time immemorial for their curative properties and whose possession by the Indians awakened some years ago the white man's desire to have. As they could not move the springs away from the Indians, they moved the Indians — much against their will — away from the springs, settling them at Pala. It is a quaint resort, this of Warner's Springs — a hotel hamlet of small adobe houses in which visitors are lodged, meals being served in a central dining-hall, and hither people come the year through, for rest, recreation, and rheumatism. The water smells to heaven of sulphuretted hydrogen, and is so hot that the Indians in their time used ingenuously to spend cold nights im-

mersed to their chins in the pools. In the chill of early morning a dense vapor rolls up from the open water in a way to suggest some infernal cauldron; and we found diversion in seeing the hotel habitués in dressing-gowns and varied dishabille flapping their gingerly way, pitcher in hand, down the path into the smoking gulch, and dodging about in the sulphurous steam like perturbed ghosts, getting their stomachs and jugs full of the ill-smelling brew.

Long after the historical tidbits we picked up about Warner's will have faded from our memories, the place will remain associated in our minds with the fact that it was near there that Biddie liked to have queered our trip. It was in the following wise:

A few miles back in the mountains Peggy had heard of an Indian village very primitive and correspondingly picturesque, where the people eat acorn-meal and weave baskets and where you can still see the quaint old-time granaries of basketry held aloft on long-legged racks to keep the rats and mice away. It was none other, in fact, than that San Ygnacio of which something has been said on a previous page. The road thither was villainous, but not so villainous that automobiles could not travel it; indeed, one had been over it a couple of days before our arrival. We would go; and to save time we had the hotel put up our lunch, paid our bill, and set out for Pala via San Ygnacio.

We found the road good enough until we got into the cañon of San Ysidro Creek, a ferny, bouldery mountain brook the name of which commemorates that saintly husbandman whose piety so impressed

high heaven that angels came and did his ploughing for him while he slept. Here on a particularly nasty grade we ran into soft dirt, which had been thrown there apparently only a few hours before to fill the ruts. Biddie groaned a bit, revolted, and stopped. We all got out to study the situation; and it was then that over the brow of the hill fat old Pedro Martín appeared, from whom we tried with our limited Spanish — the Indian had no English — to learn what lay beyond. As we talked, Pedro Martín, telling with maddening iteration that we should not have come this road, but another which was "*mas duro*" — more hard — there was suddenly a horrified cry, "Look at the car!" Biddie, left to herself, had started backward down grade and was recklessly bounding with ever-quickening speed toward a bend in the road where she must either plunge into the cañon or climb the bank. Luckily she chose the bank, went up sideways until gravity halted her, then toppled gracefully over on her head amid the sickening sound of crashing glass, her wheels spinning in the air.

Aghast, we gathered around the wreck. The top was crushed flat, gasoline was dripping from the tank, the wind-shield was in smithereens, baggage and eatables lay scattered in the public view; and we were fifty miles from a railroad and six from anywhere.

Was it that San Ysidro, heavenly ploughman, seeing the results of our trying to plough through that soft road, sent us help? Anyhow, from nowhere in particular there now appeared one after another a

round half-dozen of leisurely, fat Indians. They impassively surveyed the scene.

"*Poco malo*," said one, which means "Rather bad."

"*Parece disgracia*," observed another; that is to say, "Looks like an accident."

"*Cayó*," explained Pedro Martín, signifying "It fell down."

After a polyglot discussion in English, Spanish, the sign language, and some aboriginal dialect unknown, it was decided that the thing needed was a shovel. This being produced from a cabin across the cañon, the bank was dug into to make room for the setting-up of the car, and then, amid a world of pushing and hauling and boosting and grunting, Biddie staggered to her feet, ruffled in plumage, but, thank goodness, with an engine that went. After lowering and clamping down the crushed and groggy top, and removing the fragments of broken glass that still stuck in the wrecked wind-shield, we did not look half bad. But our interest in San Ygnacio had suffered eclipse. Gathering up the scattered baggage and rewarding our Indian friends, to their astonishment, with a donation of a half a dollar apiece all around, we backed humbly the rest of the way down the hill and took the safest way to Pala.

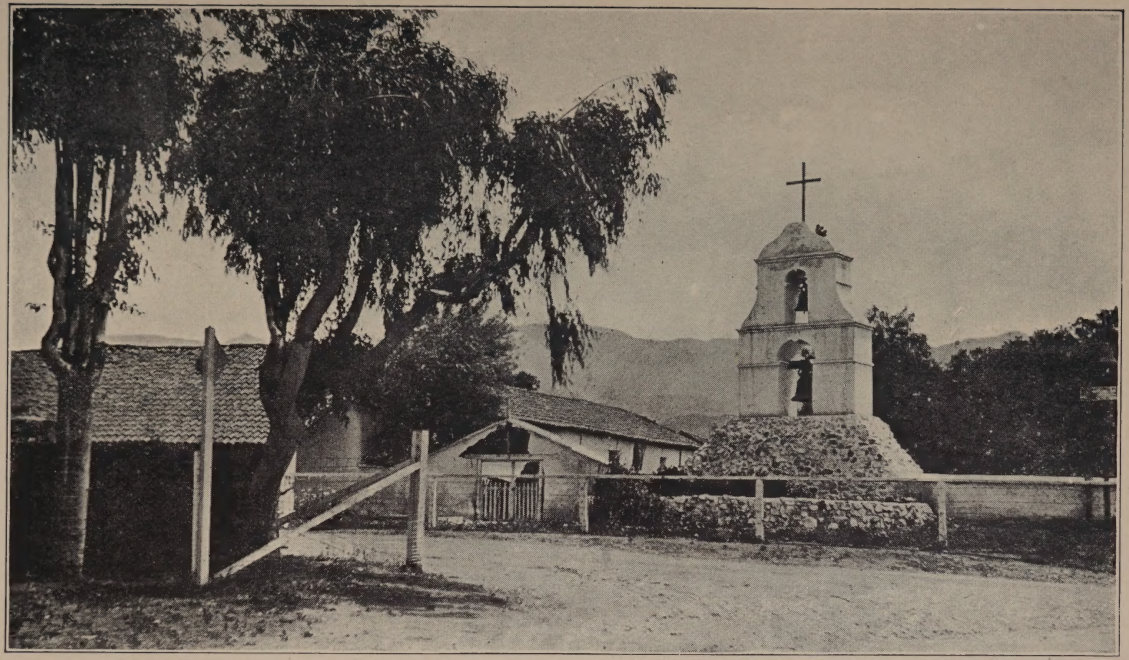
We found it in a pocket of the mountains beside the hurrying waters of the little river San Luis Rey, where it has been these hundred years. The white-walled Mission, with its red-tiled roof, its porch pavement of square *ladrillos*, and its sturdy white bell-tower asquat on the ground beside it, looks to-

day very much as it must have looked when Padre Peyri put it there, while the nineteenth century was still in its teens, to catch in the Gospel net those mountain Indians who preferred paganism to traveling to his big Mission of Saint Louis the King twenty-five miles down the river. Of all the Franciscan missionary establishments that remain in California to-day, this of Pala seems to me to hold most the atmosphere of that romantic epoch in the State's history when the gray-gowned *conquistadores* for the Lord were the chief actors. The old-time appearance is enhanced by what no other Mission now has about it, the presence of an Indian village; for here dwell the evicted of Warner's Ranch and their children in little frame cottages worn by time and weather to some degree of picturesqueness, their primal nakedness veiled now by lolling fruit trees and a riot of flowers. Among them is an occasional house of a more pretentious build belonging to Indians of a progressive temper. In one of these there lived, at the time of our visit and doubtless still does, one Salvadora Valenzuela, to whom we were referred by the Indian policeman as possibly able to put us up for the night, and, if Salvadora could not, nobody could, there being no public accommodation in the village.

Salvadora, large, placid, and motherly, and dressed quite *al estilo americano*, had doubts.

"You see," she explained, "there is a two months' old baby in the house."

"But we won't disturb it," we assured her anxiously.



PALA MISSION AND BELL-TOWER

"No, I think not, too," she replied, "but maybe it disturb *you*."

At which unthought-of contingency we laughed; whereupon Salvadora laughed, too, and a bargain was concluded.

As to meals, nobody "meals" you at Pala. There is, however, a general store which occupies one wing of the Mission building, and one need not starve. We found a bohemian satisfaction in supping on crackers and grape-juice in an aboriginal environment of Navajo blankets and Indian baskets in the trader's private sitting-room to which he had hospitably invited us. While we ate and drank, occupying all the available chairs, he sat on a table swinging his legs and told of the big flood of 1916, when the river leaped its bounds and undermined the foundations of the bell-tower, which fell incontinently on its face in a thousand fragments; and how Padre Doyle sent out calls for help and money; and then, without waiting for the response, he rolled up his sleeves, summoned his Indians, and they all went to work to build the tower up again, making use of the identical old material, except that fresh mortar had to be made, so that when the job was finished there the same old tower stood exactly as it had always been, even to the clinging cactus that had sprung up long years ago in a crack above the bells. A padre of the good old sort was Father Doyle, who mixed work with his prayers and loitered not. And all in good time the money came, too, some of it from as far away as the other side of the continent.

As we stepped out into the starry evening, some Indians were standing motionless and silent in the church porch. Looking in at the open door we could see that service was in progress. It was Good Friday night; the altar was veiled, and the statue of San Antonio, Pala's patron saint, was draped in purple. The church was dimly lit by candles powerless to swallow up the black shadows that lurked among the rafters of the unceiled roof, and in the corners where gray-mustached Indian men, darkling and still as the shadows themselves, stood or knelt. The body of the congregation was mostly composed of women, their bowed heads enveloped in black *rebosos* when not covered by the incongruity of American hats; and among their kneeling forms little children moved silently, disturbing no one and by none disturbed. At a small cabinet organ near the altar sat the padre playing an accompaniment for a choir of three Indian women and one man, who later intoned an "*Ora pro nobis*" addressed individually to saint after saint until the calendar must have been exhausted, and finally to all the saints together. The priest was a pale, spare Spaniard intensely in earnest, and, the service over, he dismissed his flock with an exhortation in Spanish that they should come on the morrow to witness the ceremony of the blessing of the holy water.

And next morning as we drove away we could see him in the dim light of the church interior, his dusky flock looking phlegmatically on, as, robed in canonicals, he read the prayers of blessing over a well-filled tub swathed in a muslin sheet. Three sleepy altar

boys in scarlet and white, dangling smoking censers and holding lighted candles at alarming angles, stood by on legs that quaked with fatigue. It was a leisurely, old-timey sort of scene that eminently fitted the primitive church with its whitewashed walls and red-tiled roof in the lap of the ancient hills.

THE COMFORTABLE HILLS OF HOME

I light my lamp in the evening;
  My work is left behind;
And the great hills of the South Country
  Come back into my mind.

HILAIRE BELLOC

I

LA SIERRA SANTA MONICA

BUT what of the sierra nearer home? Has it no word for such as cannot go arduous journeys, or at most have but a day or two at a time to spare, only their patient legs or a Ford to carry them? Is it only in the far-away places that beauty and romance have their dwelling — that the pools of quiet are?

I have not found it so. It is part of the native wealth of California that into the back windows of almost every town there are hills that look invitingly and are of easy access. There is a charm of their own in such lower altitudes, into which old roads lead, winding up the cañons that numerously cut the flanks of the ranges — cozy, unambitious, comfortable hills, jacketed snugly in well-knit chaparral, bird-haunted and flowery, and lapping in unsuspected hollows an occasional little ranch-house somnolent beside its spring and bit of orchard, with cider press and murmurous beehives in the shade of ancient live-oaks. There winter storms descend in rain, rarely in snow and that quickly melting, while the ardors of the long, dry summer are tempered with currents of coolness off the sea, which is plainly in view from knobs of vantage. Some of these ranch folk supplement the modest living from their ground by renting space for visiting ramblers and vacation-

ists to pitch their camps upon, or will lodge them in tents and unpretentious cabins fitted up for light housekeeping. All through the dry season the visitors come and go, plain people mostly who have neither money nor inclination for show and superfluities, yet nurse a longing in their hearts for the simpler elemental pleasures — the peace of the wildwood and the murmur of waters stirring among the reeds, the call of quail, the night music of coyotes and plaint of owls — the sort of people that delight in family picnics in the dappled shade of sycamores, a granite slab or fossil-studded rock for a table, and like easy-going clambers with the children through the brush in quest of Indian *morteros* and caves, or to watch the sun sinking down its ocean way to China.

The particular hills I am just now thinking of are the Santa Monicas — the Sierra Santa Monica of the Spanish-Californians. At one extremity they have got ensnared these latter days in the city's toils to the extent that they are in part incorporated within the present limits of the municipality of Los Angeles, and so add another rustic feature to this surprising metropolis which holds bean ranches, orange groves, and going oil wells in its hospitable midst. In the dimples of the slopes that overhang the Cahuenga plain scores of white-walled villas and rose-clad, wide-eaved bungalows are now lodged, and yearly increase in number. It is the Santa Monicas that the Cahuenga Boulevard crosses by a low pass back of Hollywood, taking you by that astonishing motion-picture mill called Universal City to the peach and apricot ranches and lemon groves

of the San Fernando Valley. Cahuenga Pass is virtually the eastern terminus of the Santa Monicas, and prey, as thereabouts they are, of architects and mechanics and landscape-gardeners, pitifully hacked and blasted and remorselessly built upon in inharmonious concrete and stucco till they remind one of the farthest limb of some ancient forest tree set upon and sucked starveling by mistletoe and fungus, the sight of them in their urban estate is not, to my view at least, altogether inspiriting.

Fortunately there is another side to them. For thirty-five miles as the crow flies, they extend westward, hugging the coast — a crumpled ribbon some six miles wide of lowish, brush-covered hills, now and again pinched up into peaks attaining a height of fifteen hundred, two thousand, or twenty-five hundred feet above the sea that washes their base, and ploughed deep with dozens of transverse, rugged cañons dropping steeply to the beach. They form the southern wall of that lovely valley of San Fernando just mentioned; whose northern barrier is the Santa Susana Range. Seen from some point of the latter the Santa Monicas' regularly notched skyline is a notable example of the happy nomenclature of the Spaniards who used the word *sierra*, a saw, to describe a mountain range. Follow the jagged line westward and you see it culminate in the broken crown of Bony Ridge; whence downward stepping by some lesser peaks, as Laguna and La Joya, the sierra goes to sea in the fine headland known as Point Mugú. Sauntering up the beach from there for four or five miles, the lazy Pacific surf nosing in at your left and

on your right a string of still lagoons frequented in the autumn by wild ducks and their hunters, you yourself may go to sea at Hueneme, readily seen from the slopes of Point Mugú — a remnant of what was once a seaport, now dozing and reminiscent beside a lumber pier and a lighthouse.

In the main the Santa Monicas are a wild, sparsely settled region, a considerable portion of it embraced in a few large holdings, as the extensive Rancho Malibu and its neighbor the Rancho Guadalasca, given over mainly to cattle-raising, and the ten thousand-acre tract of the Crags Country Club. Threaded by few trails and almost no roads, fog-drenched and solitary, it well befits what you have heard of it as having been in the "bad man" days a famous haunt of horse-thieves, cattle-rustlers, bandits and smugglers. The palmy era of the *contrabandistas* was during the Spanish and the Mexican régimes in California, when the drastic customs laws put an alluring premium on the business. Under Spain all importation whatever by vessels not Spanish was prohibited, and under Mexico every trader had first to enter at Monterey or San Francisco and pay duty on her lading, before she was permitted to land her goods anywhere upon the coast. This led to a systematic practice of quietly slipping cargo ashore *á la luz de la luna* at various secret coves, where confederates would look after it and see to getting it aboard again after the formality of entering half-empty holds was gone through with at the entry-port. Or they would pack it across the mountains into the hands of discreet inland buyers. The prox-

imity of the Sierra Santa Monica to the sea, on the one hand, and, on the other, to Los Angeles, must have made its fastnesses particularly handy for staging such illicit operations. As you drowse away a summer afternoon on some jutting spur of these hills, high above the surf that licks the twenty-mile fringe of the Malibu, you do not need much imagination to picture to yourself a trim wind-jammer of a century ago dropping anchor under the lee of Point Dumé, and after a while her longboat sneaking shoreward piled up with boxes and bales, to be met at the surf line by barelegged waders from the land, who splash back again with the packages upon their bent shoulders. The rogues fell out among themselves sometimes, and one picturesque event of the sort, that had its setting on the Malibu shore, has been preserved to us by Mr. Bancroft in his voluminous "History." The star actors were two rascals, one named Briones and the other's name I have forgotten (no great loss to you, I hope), who plotted with the skipper of a coaster to beach some contraband at a certain rendezvous at the foot of the Santa Monicas. As soon as the goods were brought to land, the two smugglers overpowered and bound the boatmen and then coolly notified the captain that they would turn his men over to the law unless he produced a ransom of a thousand pesos. It was Hobson's choice, and the man of the sea proceeded to ransack his cabin for the silver. While so employed, Lady Fortune befriended him in an unthought-of way. One of the smugglers, in his joy at the success of their business, began a premature cele-

bration based on alcohol, and drank himself comfortably drunk so speedily that the captured sailors got themselves out of their bonds and, leaving the goods on the sand, betook themselves to their ship, hoisted sail and disappeared from history. Señor Briones and his comrade appeared in one more scene before the curtain dropped on them. Appropriating the abandoned merchandise, they packed it off to the pueblo, where they were caught with the goods on them and clapped into jail to meditate upon the way of the transgressor.

To the traveler by automobile the one well-known pass of the Santa Monicas, after the Cahuenga, is the Topanga, through which a beautiful, well-graded highway winds, crowded in both directions on holidays and Sundays with carloads of happy pleasure-seekers. It is one of the charms of this fine cañon that at whichever end you enter you have a dramatic surprise at the exit. If you go in from the valley side of the range, you are greeted on approaching the other end with such a sight of the sea suddenly unrolled before you as you will not soon forget; while, if you approach the cañon from the ocean, there bursts upon you from the crest of the range, after an easy ten-mile climb, a superb panorama of the San Fernando Valley with its generous greeneries of alfalfa, its pleasant orchards and truck farms, its sheets of wild flowers — the whole backed by the green walls of the Santa Susanas and farther Sierra Madre, outlined sharply or dimly according as the day is, or, sometimes, lost entirely in mist. Wayside

IN TOPANGA CAÑON, SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS

booths offer the traveler refreshment — as cider in season, melons and apricots; or the solider matters of mountain honey, nuts, and ranch-cured olives, products of the surrounding hills. If you are brisk of limb, the Topanga will make you a short pedestrian tour to occupy a couple of days, Santa Monica at one end and Owensmouth at the other, both places being termini of electric-car lines from Los Angeles; and if you choose the mid-week for it the disturbance from passing motor-cars will be less than on week-ends or Sundays. Of the two I think Santa Monica makes the better starting-point, putting you at the very outset in the thick of beauty. You follow in the freshness of the early morning — I am assuming you will set out early — the lovely curve of Santa Monica Bay with its seaward outlook, Santa Catalina in the offing, Point Dumé far ahead shaking from its forehead the clinging mists of night. Beach primroses and pink sand-verbenas lift to you their pretty faces, and there is the comradery of a surf caressing in its tenderness, if the tide be low, and of meditative gulls. Five miles of this and the road turns into the wide mouth of Topanga, and now for a while companions a bouldery watercourse through a wealth of shade from sycamore, willow, and live-oak. Out of this it gradually rises and by and by you are lifted into pure sunlight and look down as the birds do upon the tree-tops, while above you the steep sides of the cañon still rise, snugly clad in comely green coats of chaparral, enclosing you with something of their own serenity. Of human life there is for much of the way no visi-

ble sign. What impresses you is the quiet and dignity of imperturbable Nature, tolerating the encroaching world of man, but not of it; unmoved by all the fretting and striving of the big city just over the hill.

Nevertheless, there is a pleasant human touch now and again. One is furnished by Topanga Post-Office, a picturesque little cluster of weather-stained buildings when last I saw them, embraced by a mob of clambering vines and crowding tree branches, and giving upon a sunny opening where a turfy half-acre was starred with wild flowers across which a sociable collie dog came strolling to welcome me — a scene that awakened in me the memory of an English village green overlooked by its inn. And then there is, in the midst of the cañon, really an inn, a sylvan tavern embowered in oaks where after supper you are put to bed in a tent through whose tenuous walls the night sounds of the wood will pleasantly filter. If you are of the quality that invites reminiscences from your host, you will perhaps be entertained with tales of ancient adventure with flood and fire, with bears and bandits and bronco stage-horses. California is still so young that the traveler has always this chance of hearing pioneer talk from men who, like Virgil's classic hero, were themselves part of what they tell about. In out-of-the-way places in the hills, here and there an old actor in unrecorded epics is vegetating out his days, cast ashore like wreckage from the hurrying stream of life, only too glad of a listener with leisure and inclination to sit out the long-winded tales that his familiars no longer

have patience to regard. Such a one is Pinky McGrew, lank of body, imperturbable of feature, and in no way looking his seventy-and-odd years, with whom I fell in one summer day not long ago. He had been a stage-driver in his working days, and stages were still the center of his thought.

"Speaking of mines," I can hear him say in his soft drawl, between pulls at his corncob pipe, "speaking of mines, mebbe you was never up to the Senator Mine? I used to drive stage in them parts; and once I had a little black mule in the team. She was just hell, that mule; that was all there was to it. All the meanness she done would make an interestin' book. You see — got some fire about you? — you see, whatever she done, she just naturally done wrong. But for some reason she was gentle to ride once you got on her back. Well, one day we was towin' her to the stage and we overhauled a miner, stumpin' along packin' his blankets. So I says to him, 'Can you ride a mule?' I says. 'Sure,' he says. 'Well, get on that one,' says I. 'We'll pack your blankets for you in the stage.' Well, sir — got another match? — well, sir, like most miners he was stiff, and as he climbed up the mule he scraped her rump clumsy-like. Well, sir, she jumped, and he lit on her back behind the saddle, you see, and mebbe she did n't run to brush with the miner holdin' tight. All we could see was just a streak of black disappearing in the scrub. My partner he stood up on the seat to look. 'Do you see that damned mule?' says I. 'Not a hair,' says he. 'Do you see the miner?' says I. 'I see one leg,' says he. 'Well, let's get it,' says I. You see,

she throwed him head first in the brush, and he just naturally stuck that way. He was scratched up a bit, but he was n't exactly what you might call hurt. The mule? Oh, she turned up six weeks later in the Mill Creek country, lookin' pretty peart with the saddle swingin' under her belly. Some cowmen found her."

At Topanga Post-Office they can tell you of a trail to Red Rock Cañon and thence over the divide to the headwaters of the Malibu — a solitary, brushy jaunt of half a day, perhaps, with a camp at the end to house you if you will, but you must have brought your own fare. Or, if you are driving, you perforce keep the highway to the hamlet of Calabasas — place of the Pumpkins — and a few miles beyond turn off into the Cañada Las Virgenes, and so across the range into a secluded valley down which a sinuous line of willows, skirting Goat Buttes and Lizard Peak, marks the course of Triunfo Creek on its leisurely way to join Cold Creek, which issues to meet it from the opposite hills. Of these parent streams the Malibu is born, loveliest of all in the Santa Monicas. Its career is short — a scant seven or eight miles — during which it drops from the highlands to the sea in a succession of bubbly cascades and murmurous waterfalls, linked by quieter stretches rippling over shingle or halting in the shadows cast by colossal boulders, gray and white, that litter the cañon bottom. Transverse rocky dikes, like steps of some broken stairway, sole reminder of a forgotten past, bar the stream at times. They spread the waters at such places into minia-

ture broads — fair, still pools in whose translucent, jade-green depths the stately cattails and tules that fringe the edges are reflected, and the crowns of such trees as have a foothold in the crevices of the cañon cliffs. Strange cliffs they are, rising sheer a couple of hundred feet or so and pockmarked by the weather in a myriad gaping holes, which in some cases the elements have further gnawed away until they have become practical caverns, wherein one or two might comfortably enough out-sit a shower or pass a night of storm; and at the cliff base is a chaos of rocks curiously ornamented with delicate traceries exquisite as Oriental scripts, the weathered edges of fossil shells embedded there. A forest of shrubs fills the cañon bottom — wild lilac, gooseberry, California holly, mountain mahogany, coffee-berry, silk-tassel bush, sumac, snowberry, honeysuckle, wild rose — a leafy paradise for an avian miscellany of finches, warblers, towhees, thrashers, and what not, which find these lower altitudes more to their liking than the more austere upper heights. Of all these birds in the bush none is more endearing, I think, than the busy bushtits, trim little bodies alert of eye and movement, with a commendable taste for scale insects, and so delightfully careless of style in their work that they will hang upside down to a fruitful twig and peg away at it as composedly as if they were right side up and all the blood in their pretty carcasses were not going to their heads.

The Malibu being a perennial stream, its borders, even in the dead of the dry season, have grace of blossoms. Here are monkey flowers in scarlet and

yellow; the Western goldenrod mingling its yellow corymbs with the pale panicles of the waterside grasses; and the purple-starred wands of the loosestrife. Often the trail is choked by the tangles of the white sweet melilot, or tree clover, whose plucked leaves, laid away for a day or two to wither in your bureau drawer, perfume your linen without cost and as pleasantly as the Tonka beans you pay hard cash for at Mr. Pill's the druggist's. Hard by another wilding of famous fragrance grows — the leather-root, the *Psoralea macrostachya* of science, lifting its silky spikes of dusky flowers well above the head of a man. Pound out the stem with a hammer and you have a fibrous mass which will for months be a source of delicate perfume. This fiber was a rival in more primitive days of Indian hemp, for aboriginal ropes and weaves, and had that added virtue of a pleasant smell that persisted. A quaint little creeping plant with flat leaves, each as round as an old-fashioned big penny and held aloft by a stalk attached beneath its middle as a one-legged table is held up, loves the moist ground near the stream's marge, where it lives its little life in great shyness, the better pleased, apparently, if the shade of a bush protects it from the observation of the passing world. Its clustered flowers are almost microscopic in their tininess, and are so little different in color from the leaf beneath which they hide that their presence would hardly be suspected. I have never heard of its having a common name among our country folk, and its botanical one, *Hydrocotyle*, leaves one cold. Better, I think, to import from England the name given by rustics

there to a closely related species, that is, marsh pennywort, because of those penny-like leaves. Even better is another, fairies' tables. No popular name could be happier than the latter, at once accurately descriptive and stimulant to the imagination. Seeing these tiny simulations of card tables dotting the shady brook border, you like to think of Queen Titania and her ladies gathering about them at a sublimated bridge party, and, their game finished, quaffing nectar from flagons of the wild honeysuckle corollas plucked from the vines pendent from above. A picture, this, naturally enough called up by fairies' tables, and never so much as hinted at, this or any other, by Hydrocotyle. Who that is not a dry-as-dust does not applaud the practice of giving names in the vernacular to our familiar flowers? Into such business of the fancy the impulses of the race's inglorious Miltons sometimes have gone, achieving for the work a sure sort of immortality, though their own names perished. The charm of common names is "like the charm which wild flowers have as against the flowers of horticulture [suggestive in] their wildness, their homeliness, their artless simplicity. . . . These vernacular names recall inestimable memories; the Latin name may recall the plant, but not its dearest associations." So says Master John Earle, sometime Rector of Swanswick and Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Oxford. Well on to a century ago he was fishing for popular plant names in the dry brooks of ancient herbals and musty codices with something of the ardor of an Izaak Walton in pursuit of trout and bream

in the cool waters of Lea and Dove. Master Earle embodied his results in a quaint little volume entitled "English Plant Names from the Tenth to the Fifteenth Century." Therein he goes so far as to argue for the practicability of a systematic plant nomenclature in English to replace the present accepted one in Latin — a plan which, if adopted, he thinks should conduce to the more general study of a delightful science whose approaches are now hedged about by a discouraging and bristling latinity. But one wonders which is the easier job — to convert the learned to a spirit of renunciation or to teach Latin to the unlearned?

Short as the course of the Malibu is, the course of your exploration of it is likely to be still shorter; that is, if you are of an observing habit and open to persuasion. An hour or so down the wild gorge your sense of remoteness from the world of man is rudely dashed by the pricks of a barbed wire stretched across the cañon. A poster tacked to a tree informs you curtly that the Malibu Rancho ownership forbids your entrance upon its domain which here begins and extends to the beach. Of course, to some natures such a notice, with its possibilities of vicious dogs, spring guns, and ignominious ejection to follow, is stimulating; and, of course, nothing whatever may happen. Nevertheless, the Malibu notices have teeth in them, as the phrase goes, and the ranch's range riders have a way of unexpectedly turning up, gun on hip, and proving the truth of the unenviable reputation that the Malibu bears throughout the county for inhospitality. So the prudent are wont to

stop at the wire, consider the beauties and bruises of the cañon thus far a fair sample of the whole — as in fact they are — and, after a leisurely lunch, climb back to camp again.[1]

[1] The Malibu property — a part of a Spanish grant, the Malibu-Topanga, and remarkable in occupying a narrow strip of land completely monopolizing twenty miles of ocean front — came into the possession of the present owning family, Rindge by name, some thirty years ago, and almost ever since has been pretty constantly in the courts as an injured innocent with its rights encroached upon by a restless public, its neighbors, who, bottled up in remote pockets of the hills, would insist on going to town by following the line of least resistance down the cañons to the beach and so out by the Malibu's private roadways, which happened to be the only roads there were. The original Mr. Rindge appears to have been an estimable gentleman of New England birth and rearing, with a taste for rural matters — sunsets, Indian relics, picnics, and so on — and found so much of sentimental interest in his life as a Californian *ranchero* that he wrote a book about it, now scarce, entitled "Happy Days in Southern California." That road dispute, however, forever reared its head, like the serpent in Eden, and when death carried Mr. Rindge off in 1905, he left to his widow along with the property a well-developed fight with the neighbors, which she has faithfully cultivated. Somehow the vigor with which unsuspecting picnickers and strollers upon the fringe of the rancho's twenty-five square miles of wilderness are set on and evicted by the ranch guards strikes one as of a humor with Miss Betsy Trotwood's ire at donkeys on her green — a zeal out of proportion to the occasion. However, at last a breach has been made in the wall of Malibu seclusion — the governmental authorities having decreed a public road, a link of the great State Highway, to be put through the length of the Malibu, which all may travel who will.

II

"THE YOSEMITE OF SAN GABRIEL"

ALL the world loves a waterfall, but Southern California waterfalls are in much the same class as the rivers of the region, and more often than not are represented by a dry, guttered gorge or cliff side. Nevertheless, there are some perennial ones of rare beauty. Among these is one that has secured honorable mention in our national literature — the fall in Eaton's Cañon on the outskirts of Pasadena. John Muir charmingly pictured this in one of his early letters to the press, and again in more studied phrase in the chapter on "Bee Pastures" in "The Mountains of California." Bradford Torrey, too, in that delightful volume, the last from his pen, "California Field Days," has somewhat to say of it and of the birds that he saw near it. After Muir's description, I hesitate to give one of my own; so let him introduce you to it: "It is," he says, describing it as it was in the August of a dry year, "a charming little thing, with a voice as sweet as a song bird's, leaping some thirty-five or forty feet into a round, mirror pool. The cliff back of it and on both sides is completely covered with thick, furry mosses, and the white fall shines against the green like a silver instrument in a velvet case. Here come the [San] Gabriel lads and lassies from the commonplace orange groves to make love and gather ferns and dabble

EATON'S FALLS IN THE SIERRA MADRE

away their hot holidays in the cool pool. They are fortunate in finding so fresh a retreat so near their homes. It is the Yosemite of San Gabriel. The walls, though not of the true Yosemite type either in form or sculpture, rise to a height of nearly two thousand feet. Ferns are abundant on all the rocks within reach of the spray, and picturesque maples and sycamores spread a grateful shade over a rich profusion of wild flowers that grow among the boulders from the edge of the pool a mile or more down the dell-like bottom of the valley, the whole forming a charming little poem of wildness — the vestibule of these shaggy mountain temples." [1]

The lapse of nearly half a century since Muir's visit to the spot has wrought little change in it, and Eaton's Cañon, close to whose entrance the villas of Pasadena millionaires are rapidly rising, is notable as being an example of unspoiled, rugged wildness at the very edge of one of the best-groomed little cities in the United States. The neighborhood of the waterfall is, I think, the most accessible locality from Los Angeles for a glimpse of that shy and charming bird, the water ouzel. Most visitors adventure no farther into the cañon than this, but a dim trail, zigzagging up the crumbling east wall, leads the hardier climber around the head of the waterfall into recesses of the cañon as magnificently wild as any in the whole sierra. The trail, often a mere shelf along the face of the chasm's wall, looks dizzily down upon the waters of Eaton's Creek far below, sometimes visible as a white thread among boulders, oftener

[1] Reprinted in *Steep Trails*, pp. 148–49.

unseen and betrayed only by the hum of its hidden waters hurrying to the fall. It was with their usual aptness for geographic naming that the Spaniards called the gorge by a term that means Precipice Cañon, long before old Judge Eaton half a century ago planted his famous vineyard on the sunny mesa at its mouth and suffered many things of many bears and coyotes that habitually raided his laden vines. A couple of stiff miles above the falls a branch cañon enters, and out of it there tumbles by a series of small waterfalls a lively brook that heads under Mount Lowe. Near this point the trail ends in a leafy dell where for some years a small resort with the poetic name of "Camp Idle Hour" has attracted lovers of sylvan seclusion. Having come thus far, you will naturally want to keep up the bouldery channel of the stream picking your way among the massive rocks through a fine forest of live-oak, bay, and big-cone spruce, until you scramble out at last quite breathless at the cañon's top under the long white face of Mount San Gabriel, where the trail between Mounts Lowe and Wilson edges along, and where in the shade of spruces and oaks at a mile above the sea there is a little spring of purest water to refresh you.

One Sunday, as I lay there, steeping my being in the heavenly stillness and enjoying the exquisite view down the cañon, shouldering its way past the mountain's colossal buttresses out to the great plain of San Gabriel, I became conscious of a movement in the shrubby jacket of the slope some distance below me. By and by it parted and a man emerged

into view. Clear of the bushes, he stopped and looked contemplatively about, serene in his unconsciousness of being observed. Had he been a deer or a partridge, he could not have fitted his wild environment more neatly, he seemed such a natural man, so physically perfect a specimen. Tall, symmetrically proportioned, bronzed of skin and without a hat, with long tawny hair and mustache, he looked the primitive, Homeric, or Paphlagonian man, as Thoreau might say. His clothing was of the scantest — a sleeveless, collarless union suit of faded blue that displayed in their fullness his muscular arms and splendid chest. In one hand he carried a stone axe such as cave men in museums and pictures are supplied with. Save for his shred of modern attire, he might have stepped up from the Stone Age.

In a few moments he caught sight of me and came forward, inquiring in phraseology and accent that bespoke the Scandinavian, if there were many "tourists" in the cañon that day. When I told him I had seen none at all, he was plainly disappointed. He was, he informed me, with mingled simplicity and importance, the Nature Man of Mount Wilson, living by himself upon the mountain, bathing daily in the sunshine, and working on the toll road for the wherewithal to supply such modest necessaries as Nature herself did not provide him. Now that morning, it seems, he had been seized with a desire to have a photograph taken of himself, and to that end he had come abroad thinking to find in the cañon some stroller equipped with a camera and willing to do the service for him. When I held my camera up

to view, he fairly crowed with delight and prepared to pose, smoothed down his hair and struck an attitude, with head thrown back and upward gaze, the axe swung well forward. The picture taken, he wrote laboriously in my notebook the address to which I must mail the prints, and I must be sure, he earnestly enjoined me, to keep a good one for myself. He then struck straight up through the chaparral, and disappeared.

Upper Eaton's is a wild, rugged region visited only by those who find a stimulus in roughing it, who enjoy the solitude of pure wilderness, the exercise of scrambling over granite boulders, and the excitement of picking a hazardous way up precipitous slopes treacherous with shaly rock each piece of which needs to be carefully tried before trusting one's weight to it. It is a flowery region even in January, when, if rains have fallen early, the dainty dentaria unfolds its exquisite bells in warm pockets by the creek, manzanita, wild currant, and gooseberry are in bloom, and the quinine bush drops its beaded tassels of gray green. Later the dun slopes of chaparral break brightly into color, acre upon acre of massed white and blue. This is the flowering of the wild lilacs, that most spectacular of spring miracles in the California mountains, which suggests in its joyousness that vivid figure of the Psalmist, "the mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs." Of a quieter beauty is the blooming of the lantern-of-the-fairies, an endearing little globe-tulip which loves the seclusion and subdued light of highland thickets, each flower a satiny white globe tinged

IN THE SAN GABRIEL CAÑON, SIERRA MADRE

with a purplish glow as from a light within, and daintily pendent, like a fairy lantern, indeed, from a threadlike stem. Of fern life, too, there is an abundance rather noteworthy, though not of many species, lush growth of aspidiums and pellæas, woodwardias as tall as yourself, and, on cliffs perpetually wet by trickling water, that cosmopolite the maidenhair of literature, *Adiantum capillus-veneris*. There is a touch of romance, I think, in thus meeting on this Hesperian edge of our New World a plant that doubtless graced the slopes of ancient Helicon, the familiar of the primal gods. Old herbalists called it capillaire and weightily recommended the liquor from its sodden stems as a remedy for fallen hair. This classic maidenhair should not be confused with the much commoner *Adiantum emarginatum* of the California mountains, a fern much less exacting in respect of moisture and to be met on cañon slopes almost anywhere.

Following up the dry channel of a brook one summer day, I came on a tangled mat of grasslike greenery bearing racemes of pale blue flowers resembling a lobelia. It proved to be Palmerella, of the lobelia family — a plant by no means confined to Eaton's Cañon, as I was afterward to learn, but which adorns the shady sides of other gorges of the Sierra Madre. It is a flower whose modest face always brings to my mind the memory of that kindly and most industrious botanical explorer of the Southwest, Dr. Edward Palmer, in whose honor Dr. Asa Gray named the genus. An Englishman by birth, inheriting a love of flowers from his father who was a pro-

fessional horticulturist, he came to America while still in his teens and studied medicine. During the Civil War and later during our Indian troubles, he served as surgeon at various army posts in the Far West, always collecting and learning, even when the soldiers were bayoneting and burning. I take it he was a doctor quite out of the ordinary, for when his medicine chest was empty he made shift to doctor still with wild herbs that his botanical knowledge enabled him to turn to account. When the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition was being planned, Palmer was sent to Southern California to collect botanical and ethnological material for it; and it was in the course of this trip, extended into Lower California, that Palmerella was discovered. The little plant was noticed by him in the depths of the great Tantillas Cañon in Lower California, out of which he scrambled with the specimens in his hat tied on for safe-keeping.[1] The scant records of Dr. Palmer's life, busy in the kindly interests of science, contain an occasional anecdote of human interest. I like particularly one told by Mr. W. E. Safford, his memorialist,[2] which is appealing both as an exhibition of kind-heartedness and of alertness to seize an unlooked-for opportunity. He was lying ill, it seems, on a cot in his little hut at Fort Grant, when he noticed a cat, which had a litter of kittens in the room, bringing in an occasional small animal for her hungry family. As she passed his cot, he would stop her,

[1] Our California plant differs in some minor particulars from that of the Tantillas Cañon and is given varietal distinction as *Palmerella debilis serrata.*

[2] *Popular Science Monthly*, April, 1911.

gently remove her catch, and after securing for himself the skull and the skin — the parts needful for identification — he would return the carcass to Tabby and let her proceed with it. So were secured several specimens of rodents not before known to science. I like, too, the story they tell of his collections on Guadalupe Island off the coast of Lower California, an island he was the first botanist to visit. This desolate place was overrun by goats, and goats, of course, are no respecters of rare plant life. There are, however, cliffs that even goats cannot scale, and from such situations some of Palmer's rarities — he got there altogether twenty-one species new to the world of science — were literally fished up with a long pole tipped with a slip-noose. A pleasant sight that, do you not think? — the learned Doctor flat on his stomach at a precipice edge, carefully casting for Guadalupan daisies and buttercups, and landing them under the very beards of the disappointed billies!

So in the greenwood do the plants tell a varied story.

III

WINTER IN THE CAÑONS

SO long as our knowledge of the Far West is what we have picked up from books or from observation from a car during a hurried personally conducted tour, our notion of a cañon is of something rather colossal, deep, precipice-sided, more or less creepy; even Doré-esque; at the best not particularly comfortable, or fit to be lived with. All of which is true of some cañons, but by no means of all, as the word "cañon" is used in California.[1] After dwelling for a season among Californians, sharing their outings and humbler sort of week-end adventures in the open, we learn that "cañon" is, in popular parlance, in the same class with the word "ranch." There are thousands of one, two, and three-acre "ranches" in California to one of the baronial domains peopled with cowboys and bucking broncos that novelists delight to write about; so to one Grand Cañon or Royal Gorge there is no end of cozy little cañons often disregarded of geographers, veining the lower slopes of the mountains where the roots of these — to use a Ruskinism — spread outward to the plain. Occa-

[1] Though *cañon* is pure Spanish, its use to mean a mountain gorge is peculiar to the United States. To a Spaniard or a Spanish-American the word conveys no such idea, but something tubular, as a gun-barrel or a cannon. In place of *cañon* in our sense of the word, Spaniards, Mexicans, and South Americans have a number of terms locally current, as *cañada*, *quebrada*, *quiebra*, *garganta*, etc.

sionally one nurses a living brook, but oftener their watercourses are intermittent, vanishing utterly in the dry season or withdrawing to the cañon-heads there to linger as springs or small *ciénagas*, wells of refreshment to birds and bees and four-footed furry folk until the rains of winter come to start the streams again. Still oftener there is no true stream at all, only the muddy run-off of the storms, short-lived as the storms themselves. A scattering of trees — cottonwoods, sycamores, live-oaks, and willows — marks the bottom of the cañon; and its sides, rising at a leisurely angle, are perennially green with the usual chaparral plants. Easy of access from the foothill villages and valley towns, they become humanized in a way that the great cañons of the travelers' tales are stranger to. Hither in the early weeks of the year the children come to gather the wild flowers that the plough has driven from the valley. How the cañon echoes to the music of their laughter and cheerful treble in triumphant chatter over the first finds of the season! All through the summer, Sunday picnickers gather here to escape the midday ardors of the valley, sedate family parties with newspapers or books, or lovers two by two whose reading is in each other's eyes; and hither in the late autumn the holly-gatherers come in quest of their favorite greens for holiday decoration. To these last as much as to any one, I fancy, we owe the trails that make the recesses of many of these cañons accessible without too great rending of clothing, for the richest spoil of holly is usually in the remoter nooks. How dear this cheerful little tree is to Cali-

fornians! A close second, I think, to the poppy, which of all wildings is their dearest. In a land where true holly is neither indigenous nor of easy cultivation, this pretty make-believe, evergreen of leaf and ruddy of berry, is a substitute that needs no apology. Few California homes but have sprigs of it stuck in window and mantel at Christmas-time, and are the cheerier and kindlier for its presence. It is, indeed, a prime feature of the season, not to be omitted, though the stars fall. Anxious folk deplore the annual rifling of the bushes in the hills as surely leading to the plant's extermination; and, indeed, a sad amount of ruthlessness attends the business.[1] Nevertheless, it is capable of looking out for itself to some extent through choice of location, and whole cañon-sides are aglow in the winter with the crowded berries, growing where even the most goat-footed clamberer would be baffled in his attempts to reach them. Not only is the true holly's special charm of foliage and fruit shared by this so-called holly of the Californians, but the latter has an added beauty in its flowers, for the blossoming of the real holly is so inconspicuous as to be easily overlooked. In early summer ample panicles of snowy blossoms, each like an exquisite tiny single rose, spread a filmy sheet of white upon the crowns of the bushes, and this feature, conspicuous as hawthorn bloom, seems especially to have caught the notice of cultivators in Eng-

[1] Luckily for the plant's future, the California Legislature a year ago passed a protective law forbidding the sale of California holly gathered from public lands, and restricting the collecting of it for private use to small specimens which must be taken without mutilation of the branches.

land, where the plant was long ago introduced into gardens and given the name of "California May." To the Indian a certain utilitarian quality, not recognized by the white race, endued our holly with an especial interest — the edibility of the berries. We who have been coddled habitually on plumper and juicier fruits regard the humble fruitage of the California holly as of negligible worth, yet when thoroughly ripe it may be chewed with a certain enjoyment by ramblers of catholic tastes. The plant is closely akin to the apple and pear, and botanists who pride themselves on purity of speech do not call the fruit a berry, but a pome, which is what an apple is. Nor do they speak of the tree as holly, but as *Heteromeles arbutifolia.*

But what I started particularly to talk about in this chapter was winter-time in these cañons. In our southern sierras below three thousand feet there is rarely any snowfall, and none whatever that lies for longer than a few hours. If the cañons then are blocked to us at all, it is but temporarily from a stream swollen out of bounds by a heavy rainfall, or a landslide from the same cause. All winter long they offer, to those who have eyes to see, the spectacle of an unfolding life which pushes up through the dry leaves very quickly after the first generous rain of the season. This may happen as early as October, or even September, but it is usually not to be expected until November, and in some untoward years is delayed until January or February. Everywhere the countryside of the latter year has a particular ap-

peal to the rambler, but to some natures the enjoyment is dampened by the foreknowledge of impending snow and killing frosts, when for months their beloved will be rapt from them. The December mood of these California cañons is overcast by no such shadow. Full-heartedly we may surrender ourselves to the loveliness about us, assured that the progress of the winter will be from beauty to beauty till the fullness of spring, as bud expands into flower. If there are frosty mornings, as there will be, they yield space to genial noons.

Well into December the deciduous trees of the cañons hold their crowns and make a colorful picture, which, if keyed less vividly than the colors of an Eastern autumn, yet stirs our spirits to a similar response. It is best enjoyed from far up the hillside, whence we see it filling the floor of the cañon — the cottonwoods and willows a limpid yellow, the sycamores old gold and ruddy brown; and mingled with them in sober, steadfast green are the live-oaks, which love their leaves too much to drop them any faster than they can grow others to replace the loss. At middle elevations where the big-leaf maple is abundant, the cañons are luminous with a pallid yellow light that seems other-worldly, the reflection from myriads of the fallen leaves which pave the way as with patines of gold. Out of a blue sky the sun shines warm as on pleasant days of summer, and rarely is there any wind. For weeks this serene temper is maintained; then one morning a veil spreads over the sky; a damp wind from the southeast sets in; by afternoon the ranges to the northwest grow

dun with thickening mists, which as they settle down break upon the higher crests in streamers of rain. The world shuts in all gray about us and the sky is adrip; it is as if a great sponge were being squeezed above us; for so, rather than in hard downpours, do the rains ordinarily begin. The long drought is broken, and pulling up our collars we hurry for the cheerful shelter of home. I think none can enjoy the kindness of the rain as do the dwellers in a land where at least half the year is continuous sunshine.

Hard upon this first substantial storm, which may last for two or three days with varying intensity and soaks the ground to the root of things, the cañons awake. Dormant springs renew their waters; brooks move more briskly; their sluggish pools, clogged with the summer's accumulation of leaves and fallen acorns, overflow and fill again with musical tinkle the stretches of gravelly channel long silent. Under the magic of the rain the selaginella beds, which throughout the dry season were as shriveled rags and tatters upon the sunburnt sides of the cañon, are transformed in a night to trig green mats; the clenched fists of the goldback ferns as quickly become outstretched palms, and the polypody ferns, Western cousins to Thoreau's "cheerful colonists" of New England woods, thrust up eager croziers from the mould, and uncurl their whole length in an incredibly short time, elbowing and overlapping till the shady sides of the cañon have the appearance of being shingled with the massed fronds. Grass seeds, that have lain as dead among the fallen leaves, burst

their shells, and a myriad spears of green shoot up, filming with verdure all the cañon floor and walls. Mingled with these are the aspiring seedlings of a hundred annuals, a pretty puzzle for botanical enthusiasts to try their wits upon. Gaunt stalks of shrubs, that seemingly died a month or two before, develop a sudden liveliness, bud like Aaron's rod, and shortly break into leafy laughter. Noticeable among these are the wild currants and gooseberries, which, according to my observation, are the first shrubs to flower. Of especial charm is a currant whose sticky foliage exhales a peculiar, pungent aroma, none too agreeable, that has gained for the plant the popular name of "incense shrub." If any blossom is earlier than this in the floral New Year I do not know it. It often appears when that last straggler of the old year's flowery procession — the wild fuchsia — is still blooming, and to gather the two side by side touches the fancy pleasantly, evidencing that, whatever men may think about being off with the old love before being on with the new, Nature is not so particular. To come in the winter woods upon sight of the wild currant's newborn racemes in white and pink looking out from swaddlings of opening leaves is adventure enough in beauty for one day. This shrub has a thrifty habit of expanding only a few blossoms of its stock at a time; as these mature, a few more are released, and so on, the raceme elongating gradually, until at last the flowers at the tip open, and all is done. In this leisurely fashion the blooming period is spread over two or three months, and a good example is given to

those spendthrift plants that pay out their floral wealth riotously in one debauch of beauty and for the rest of the season are reduced to an allowance of bare leaves.

Of quite different aspect is the currant's bristly kinsman, the fuchsia-flowered gooseberry, whose tawny, wandlike branches in the dry season are a mass of prickles and forbidding spines triple-parted and sharp as needles. In such unlovely surroundings the newborn flowers are cradled, appearing usually in January and soon drooping in slender tubes of intense red half an inch long, to which another half-inch is added by the straight, exserted stamens, also red. These fuchsia-like flowers fringe the stems through a length sometimes of several feet, dripping fierily amid the glossy green foliage, making a spectacular sight in the winter cañons. There is another gooseberry of the cañons which flowers about the same time in tones of garnet and pale green — a charming creation; but, lacking the brilliance of its splendid cousin, it is more easily overlooked. Another winter bloomer of the chaparral occurring in many of the cañons is the quinine bush, whose flowers have a curious beauty. Green and arranged in pendent tassels, several inches long, they are of two sexes, the males resembling a string of tiny bells, the females a broken strand of beaded necklace. In January, too, we may expect to find the tiny white urns of the manzanita bloom offering chubby posies to their lovers. Though this shrub prefers the snow-visited altitudes, its ruddy trunks are sometimes seen veining the thickets of the lower ranges. And in

January, too, the first bloom of the mountain lilacs flecks the warmer slopes of the cañons — a bloom, by the way, combining utility with beauty, for when rubbed up in water it produces a lather as cleansing as soap and spicily fragrant. Among the trees willows and alders show an awakened life in their lengthening catkins, and on the evergreen bays there is a sparkle as of brilliants where the clusters of tiny yellow flowers gleam in the shadow of the dense foliage. This foliage, when crushed, yields one of the characteristic perfumes of these cañons — a pungent, spicy odor that may cause headache if inhaled too energetically. On the homœopathic principle, the Indians have made use of the leaves to relieve the same complaint, carrying them in the hat or stuffing a wad of them in the nostrils. Safer and more delicious is another common fragrance of the cañons — that of the California sage, which needs but a touch to release its sweetness. This gray-green undershrub (*Artemisia Californica*) is not unlike another artemisia, the imported southern wood of old gardens, which masquerades in England under a variety of names, some of which have got transferred (by English settlers, doubtless) to our California plant, as lad's-love and old-man. Readers of "Ramona" will remember how that stricken heroine was brought through a fever with liberal doses of a tea made of old-man, which is a standard remedy still in rural California households. The queer name is a relic of a superstition that antedates the Christian era; to wit, that the leaves of the European southernwood, if placed under an old man's pillow, would be

efficacious in renewing his youthful powers. As for lad's-love, that term embalms the memory of an ancient practice, highly recommended in its day, of making an ointment with the ashes of this plant and smearing it on the faces of striplings to hasten the growth of tardy beards! Are we not a queer lot, we mortals? The more one studies humanity's adventures in living, the more one is entertained by the workings of its fancy. God, who made us, must enjoy many a tender smile over His creation. I hope you do not take it for irreverence — I mean none — to suppose the Godhead has a sense of humor — He who has so abundantly endowed His children with that blessed quality.

The cañons here and there harbor a recluse who thinks, by mortification of the flesh and contemplation in the hush of Nature's temple, to penetrate the veil of the Great Mystery. One such twentieth-century eremite, I particularly remember, a Teuton of some stripe, who, during the Great War, sought shelter from spy hunters by foxily anglicizing his name — as Koch into Cook — a futile business, for he still could not pronounce it without the betraying guttural. One of the gentlest of men, he would kill not even a mouse, and with greatest reluctance could be brought to throw a stone at a marauding dog, and then not to hit but to frighten it. He had a neat little camp under an oak at the head of a dry arroyo, in a retired pocket of the hills, where he could count on being little disturbed by ramblers and busybodies. "When a train of thought is on," he explained to me once, striking an attitude, his hand

dramatically clasping his forehead, "and somebody comes, *ach*, all is gone, and who knows if ever it comes back? The progress of a month, maybe, all gone in one minute. My friend, that is a most serious calamity." He secured his supplies from a foothill town a few miles away. Thither he would walk a couple of times a month, leading a dainty little burro under a pack-saddle. Morning and evening he fed the animal a tomato-canful of barley (twice that on days of travel), and twice a day the can was cleaned as scrupulously as his own cup and platter were cleaned. "Animals," he would say, "are they not incarnations of the same vital principle as man? They look to us as to gods; and as the Vital Principle in nature cares for us, so, my friend, should we care for these dependent beasts." He called himself a student of the Occult, and trained for his business as faithfully as an athlete for a race. Eschewing all meat as conducive to carnality, all tobacco, tea, and coffee as diverting stimulants, he confined his diet, during these bouts with the Unseen, pretty much to nuts — almonds in particular — and dried fruits, with only water to drink. On this fare he throve, and seemed always as plump as a bird. His aversion to taking life extended even to the vegetable kingdom; for plants, like animals, he was convinced, were also embodiments of the one life that animated the universe under diverse forms. So, to pluck a spear of wheat before it matures its grain is in the same class as drowning a kitten or strangling a baby; and to eat a head of lettuce before flowering and seeding, how does it differ from cannibalism? He strongly

recommended me to read "Zanoni," "A Strange Story," and "A Romance of Two Worlds" — dilettante efforts to the advanced student, he thought, but useful to put the novice in a mood for real study, for almonds and water and rapt meditation. He must have had a bank account somewhere, for a more care-free man I never knew, and he could not have got his supplies without cash down. How joyously he unfolded his airy fancies! "A flower," he said one day, "is a beautiful thing, and people think of it usually as only that, to be admired or stuck in the buttonhole; but, my friend, it is vastly more than that; it is the crystallization of a thought. It is important work to get that interior thought of the flower, the interior thought of all nature. That is what I study to get. What the average people know of nature is but the chapter heads; the real meat of the subject, the interior life, that is not all at once revealed, and never to the layman, for fear he might use the knowledge to his fellows' hurt. The revelation is only to the adept." I looked for him to quote Tennyson on the flower in its crannied wall, but he did not; he was taking the subject up where Tennyson left off.

Of quite a different pattern was another man of the hills upon whom I stumbled one winter evening. He was the proprietor of a boarding-camp in an oak-grown side-cañon at the foot of Mount San Gabriel. Dusk was settling in the hollows of the hills, and I might easily have passed the place unconsciously but for the melancholy sighs of a donkey which drew my eyes to a distant glimmer of light in the woods. Going toward it, I found a little village of white

tents set here and there in the shelter of the oaks, and in their midst a large frame building housing the light. I knocked, and a voice within bade me enter. Pulling a string that lifted an old-fashioned wooden latch, I stepped into a barnlike room of the regulation backwoods type, the walls and naked rafters hung with skins of deer, mountain lions, foxes, and wild cats, antlers of bucks, strings of pine cones, and other sylvan spoil. The place was fitfully lighted by a fire of great logs blazing in a cavernous chimney-corner, and seated upon the hearthstone in the ruddy glow was a girl shelling acorns. She was a slim-faced lassie, comely beyond the average, and some glittering bangles at her wrists combined with a green scarf flung carelessly about her shoulders and head, to give her a gypsy air. At the opposite corner of the fireside was a young man who rose from his chair as I came in and greeted me pleasantly — a fair-haired, ruddy-cheeked, stocky young fellow, who proved to be the proprietor. The acorns, it transpired, had been gathered from the cañon live-oaks roundabout, and the kernels were now to be ground in a meat-chopper, mixed with wheat flour, and baked in a cake. The native bitterness of the nuts would be dissipated by the heat, the lady averred. "Would it not be a pity to let so much good food go to waste?" she said, going on with her work. "The trees are loaded with these acorns and they come to the ground with every wind, so that even the squirrels are surfeited. Such pretty things they are, too, rich chestnut brown with beautiful furry caps. They are not much bitter, either; you

may roast them on the top of the stove, like chestnuts, and they soon become quite sweet."

It turned out that the couple were brother and sister, the latter an artist, who enjoyed an occasional escape from her city studio to the freedom of the hills; and they came of a Polish stock that had included among its scions several who had attained distinction in music and the drama. The brother, in the course of a mountain outing, had discovered this unclaimed nook in a wild but easily reached part of the sierra, built a cabin, and after living there a while had bethought him of making it a source of livelihood, surrounding his original building with tents as needed, and clearing a garden spot which he irrigated from a near-by living brook.

"Johnny's a good cook," remarked the young lady as she rose to light the lamps and wheel the supper-table up to the fire, "and it's good eats, let me tell you, that holds the custom in this business. Once in a while he gives 'em a little Polish touch — *punchki*, for instance. You don't know what that is? It's a sort of doughnut, you might say, with jelly inside. Besides, the people like to be up here in the hills. There's fishing not far away in season, and there is always the chance of seeing deer on Barley Flats, and mountains to climb, and dances at night, and talks about the evening bonfire, and sleep — ! Glory, how you sleep up here! People in stuffy town rooms don't know how good sleep can be till they get into the upper air."

It was a cozy supper *à trois* in front of the fire — fried ham and steaming hot potatoes, coffee and

stewed peaches, Norma, a huge, grave collie, lying quietly alongside with one eye shut and the other open; then, after the dishes were cleared away and the fire stirred into a fresh blaze, a gramophone was set going. I was used to the "canned music" of the ordinary public mountain resort and steeled myself for a harrowing succession of fox-trots and rag, but there came instead the heavenly strains of Schumann's "Träumerei," followed by Dvořak's "Humoresque," the "Beautiful Blue Danube Waltz," and the great quartette from "Rigoletto." There stirred within me the dim memory of a poem Walt Whitman had once written on "Italian Music in Dakota," and it was rather interesting to find myself in a situation akin to that which had awakened so noted an inspiration.

As my host lighted me later to my cot in a tent, he explained about the music. "You see," said he, "whenever I go to the city, instead of blowing myself off to something that won't last, I treat myself to a new record; so now I've quite a little library of music that does n't wear out."

Lying in bed I could see through a rent in the tent roof a brilliant star shining, and there came to mind my student of the Occult, who might at that instant have been mooning over it. Man changes his skies, but not his nature; and here in the wilderness I had found two universal types — the one happily delving and hewing, ministering to the homely needs of his fellow wayfarers, and leaving the stars to their courses; the other, touched to the soul by the wonder and beauty of the natural world, seeking through

ACCOMMODATIONS IN A TREE-TOP

subordination of the flesh to know somewhat of the spirit that vivifies and upholds all form. Is it for us to say which is the better employed, when each is engaged not so much in a part that he has chosen as in one out of which he cannot live with truth to himself?

THE END

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